

Christian Courier

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Association of Vineyard Churches asks Toronto airport church to separate

Alan Doerksen

TORONTO — After some serious disagreements with its parent church, the Toronto Airport Vineyard church has agreed to separate from the the Association of Vineyard Churches (AVC), based in Anaheim,

Calif. The separation will officially take place on Jan. 20, at which time the church will announce its new name. Until then, the church will be known as the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship.

Fellowship.

John Wimber, international director of AVC, and several members of the AVC board, met in Toronto with senior staff of the Airport Vineyard on Dec. 5 to announce the decision. Word of the meeting soon reached the Internet, reports Daina Doucet, who does publicity for the Airport Vineyard. To clear the air about the decision, John Arnott, senior pastor of the Toronto church, released an open letter to the public explaining some reasons for the split.

In his letter, Arnott states: "This decision to separate was initiated by the U.S. AVC board.... We were surprised at See WIMBER page 2...



John Arnott, senior pastor of the Airport Vineyard Church.

Vancouver realtors collect blankets, food for homeless

Jane Ouwehand

VANCOUVER — "I've always been aware of the less fortunate," says Don McKay of the greater Vancouver real estate board. "A lot of people assume they're being looked after, but they're not."

McKay knows better. When he worked in a hotel on the edge of downtown he got to know some of the homeless. He has also had friends who "fell by the wayside and had to be brought to a detox centre." It has always been part of his lifestyle to help those who are poor.

McKay telephoned a few of the better known missions in Vancouver, such as Central City Mission, The Dugout and The Lookout to ask what was needed. "I got the same feedback from them all," says McKay. "Blankets, food, warm coats, toiletries, socks and underwear" were on the wish list mission staff gave him.

McKay spoke to the other directors of the real estate board, and together they decided to take on the project of collecting blankets and food for the homeless in the downtown east side. "I always think that in most situations, if the need is put out to the public, they respond," he says.

The board's goal is to collect 5,000 blankets. According to McKay, Central City Mission gave away between 700 and 800 blankets on the first really cold night last year. McKay would like to be able to give that many to each of the three larger missions downtown, and then fewer to some of the

smaller missions, according to the number they request.

Donations of food will also be collected. Of food banks

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Extended Christmas

*Before you enter the new year,
say a prayer for God's coming kingdom
among you in mundane tasks
and unspectacular sinners,
let's say urban shepherds
and business magi
or senior citizens with visions.
Say a prayer for the continuing
incarnation of God's love
in human flesh, made, not begotten,
turning the most ordinary moments
into instants of gloria!* BW



JOHN PATER

News

Wimber upset over 'manifestations'

...continued from page 1

the finality of the decision. We had hoped to have some input into the process. We thought that the board was not getting an accurate picture of what was taking place at the renewal meetings and that any 'issues' could be explained and resolved. The board, we were told, thought otherwise, and we were offered no opportunity for discussion. We were removed without due process."

Not reflecting the Vineyard model

According to Arnott, the AVC felt that the Toronto Vineyard's renewal services were not reflecting the Vineyard model. "As well, John Wimber felt he could no longer answer questions, including innuendoes and rumors, regarding the renewal services," Arnott writes. "Rather than ask us to revamp the renewal meetings, they released us to continue as we believe God is leading us."

Doucet agrees that renewal services were the main point of disagreement with the AVC.

In particular, Wimber was "really concerned and upset" over Arnott's statements on "manifestations" of the Holy Spirit. This refers to the laughing, barking, and similar phenomena connected with the Airport Vineyard's renewal services, which have attracted international attention. When believers are connected with the power of the Holy Spirit, "sometimes there'll be a physical reaction," asserts Doucet.

In a recent book about the Toronto Vineyard, Arnott devoted one chapter to such manifestations. "Wimber endorsed the book, but he didn't read it," says Doucet. "We feel that John Wimber has misconstrued what is going on at the Toronto Vineyard."

No biblical justification for 'exotic practices'

The church holds regular renewal services on week nights. Doucet comments that many people who have attended these services have told her "they've never had such equipping [of the Spirit] in their lives."

In an official letter announcing the withdrawal of AVC's support from the Toronto church, Wimber spelled out some reasons for the move. "We cannot at any time endorse, en-

courage, offer theological justification or biblical proof-texting for any exotic practices that are extra-biblical — whether in Toronto or elsewhere," Wimber writes. "Neither can these practices be presented as criteria for true spirituality or as a mark of true renewal. Our position is that the renewing works of the Spirit are authenticated by that which is clearly stated in Scripture as works of the Kingdom of God."

He adds that manifestations such as those experienced at the Airport Vineyard "should not be promoted, placed on stage, nor used as the basis for theologizing that leads to new teaching."

Wimber emphasizes that the AVC board stated this position in a September 1994 report which was agreed upon by the leadership of the Toronto church.

Fear of restraining the Spirit

"We believe the leaders at the Toronto Airport Vineyard have repeatedly violated the guidelines in this report, both in practice and in print, in spite of many expressions of concern," writes Wimber. "Therefore, it is my determination to withdraw endorsement from the principle leaders of the Toronto Airport Vineyard who have chosen not to minister within the

framework of the values and ministry style of the AVC."

A letter from the AVC board to Vineyard pastors gave details on other points of conflict with the Toronto church. "There seems to be a fundamental belief among some leaders at [the Toronto church] that one can't and should not administer or pastor renewal for fear of quenching the work of the Holy Spirit," writes Todd Hunter on behalf of the board. He further explains the board's position that Scripture requires the church to regulate renewal and manifestations of the Spirit.

Hunter goes on to state, "There is a difference in how crowd expectations in ministry situations are handled. We have always down-played and avoided anything that could be used to 'hype' up a crowd, and [we've] been conscious of the fact that crowds and people can be manipulated by suggestions and emotions. Examples of this are the featuring of manifestations in testimonies ... and assigning catchers to each person being prayed for, conveying the strong impression and suggestion that if ministry is successful, the recipient will fall down or 'manifest' in some way."

Bob Fulton, AVC's international co-ordinator for missions and church-planting, told C.C. that the AVC board had been

talking with John Arnott for about 17 months about guiding the renewal. "Some of the things he heeded, most of the things he did not," he said.

Fulton supports Wimber's decision to 'disengage' the Airport Vineyard. "A real leader, like John Wimber is, makes a decision," he says.

Fulton says that he is friends with Arnott, and had a two-hour talk with him on the phone recently. But he adds, "it's not a happy time for either party."

Two hours after the Dec. 5 meeting at which Wimber announced this decision, Arnott sent a reply stating his church's acceptance of it.

'We are not their leaders'

On a positive note about the Toronto church, Wimber states, "We love them and desire only the best for them as they pursue what they believe to be God's intent for their lives. We simply have recognized during the last two years that we are not their leaders and that the stream called the Toronto Airport Vineyard is moving along a tributary different than ours."

In the wake of the decision, the Airport Vineyard is planning to restructure itself. In his open letter, Arnott announced, "We have asked several senior leaders from around the world

to form an International Renewal Network. They would act as an advisory counsel to help steer and facilitate this renewal. In addition, they will act as a temporary leadership covering for our church until such time as new alliances are formed."

Multidenominational network

The leaders involved with the network will represent many denominations, says Doucet. In addition, "discussions are continuing between AVC and the Airport Church," she says. No new alliances have been made yet by the church.

In a letter to Wimber, Arnott apologized on behalf of his church for "the stress and hurt we have caused you. We are sorry that we misread the intent and extent of your concerns.... We agree with you that the Vineyard movement should not have to continue answering for the move of God's Spirit in Toronto."

Arnott also asked Wimber in his letter, "Would you allow us to leave with your blessing? We ask you to take this action to minimize serious hurtful repercussions for the Body of Christ."

The Toronto Airport Vineyard will keep the public informed about any new developments at the church, says Doucet.

Helping the poor overwhelming

...continued from page 1

McKay says, "I don't know how they do it, other than the grace of God."

Bud Osborne, who is on the board of directors of the Carnegie Community Centre, also notes that those who provide for the needs of the poor on the downtown east side are overwhelmed. He says, "In recent weeks I have become aware of a very serious homeless problem."

Osborne goes on to mention how the increase in homelessness happens: Riverside is de-institutionalized and its mental patients find acceptance on the east side; the handicapped find the area to be wheelchair accessible; immigrants from El Salvador and other war-torn countries arrive penniless; wel-

fare workers from Ontario give people a one-way bus ticket to Vancouver; people with alcohol and drug problems can find no other place to live.

A variety of helpers

"There is help here. Here there is a community," says Osborne. Osborne takes note of various groups of people involved in helping: the provincial government providing housing, Christian people working in missions, social activists who are involved, people who live in the community helping one another, and local businesspeople who care about the poor.

McKay tells of one retired store owner who went out and bought 12 blankets and donated them.

"We've had a pretty good

response, considering it's a first time thing," he says.

Real estate offices in Vancouver, Tsawassen, Burnaby, Coquitlam and nearby areas are receiving donations. Some of the banks decided to contribute toiletries. Magazines such as *Courier*, *Echo*, and *Real Estate Weekly* have featured on the project. CBC TV taped a story on December 4. Realtors have a large network among themselves and McKay is hoping to see each owner donate one blanket.

Still not enough

Henry Bizien of The Lookout says, "We need blankets and warm clothing. It goes directly to the people. We keep turning away 200 people a night. They sleep on the street." The Lookout gives away ap-

proximately 300 blankets per month.

On December 7, volunteers from the real estate industry were to go around and pick up the donations and bring them together for distribution.

A spin-off that McKay is hoping for is that as realtors become more aware of the needs of the poor, they will think of them when they become aware of clients moving to smaller places and having to get rid of some of their things. There may be situations when a realtor could suggest a mission to give the things to if they would otherwise have gone to the dump.

So far, McKay is encouraged by the results, and he is already planning for next year, which he predicts will be a huge success.

News

Alberta Christian ministry to handicapped 'makes room in the Body' for all



COURTESY JOYFUL NOISE CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Director Rein Selles leads the Joyful Noise Children's Choir through a recording session: "Raising money and awareness for Rehoboth."

Jesse Schut

EDMONTON — Alberta's Rehoboth Christian Ministries takes the biblical meaning of *rehoboth* — "room" — very seriously. The organization's goal is to make room for persons with mental disabilities in today's society. Over the years Rehoboth has seen many gratifying evidences that there is room for persons with mental disabilities in society and in the church.

The story of Rehoboth's growth is a testimony to God's faithfulness, believes executive director Wally Mulder. He has seen the blessing that Rehoboth and the church have been to each other over the years.

Two decades of caring and growth

"We can't possibly do what we're doing without the support of an inclusive community," he says. "In the years that we have existed I have seen the growth of the Christian community's desire to become more than just a homogeneous worshipping group. The church is making room for persons who don't quite fit the norm."

In the 20 years since its first meeting in 1975, Rehoboth has changed tremendously. It was started by a group of parents

whose desire was to establish local support in a Christian setting for their children with mental disabilities. At the time, most of the province's handicapped persons lived in a 2,200-bed institution in Red Deer.

Reformed Christians the backbone

A volunteer committee worked that year to organize a camp program which served 25 people in rented facilities for one week in 1976. In the years following the first camp, Rehoboth continued to work on plans for establishing a residential facility in Stony Plain, a small town 20 miles west of Edmonton.

Mulder, executive director of the organization since 1981, recalls that when he came, the budget, which served eight clients, was \$225,000, all of it raised through donations. The Reformed Christian community was the backbone of the organization, supporting the faith venture with finances, prayer and visionary leadership.

"By supporting Rehoboth the Christian community affirmed that persons with mental disabilities were an essential part of the church," Mulder says. "It was more than a humanitarian gesture, where people believe

that caring for the handicapped is the right thing to do. Rehoboth was making a statement that said, 'We do more than care. We believe that we need these people to be part of the Body, and we'll make room for them.'"

Rehoboth is now an organization with 183 full- and part-time employees and a budget of \$3.4 million. Services are provided to 70 people living in residences in Stony Plain, Airdrie, Calgary, Lethbridge and Coaldale, and to another 90 who are working in day programs or supervised employment. The popular camp program has expanded to four weeks to accommodate 120 campers.

Children's choir an important fundraiser

Although 85 per cent of the budget now comes from government funding, Rehoboth still needs its supporters. "In today's economic climate, private organizations such as Rehoboth need to demonstrate more and more their ability to be financially self-sufficient," says Mulder. "We try to generate money through work programs, but we definitely rely on the support of the Christian community. That's why we welcome the involvement of the

Joyful Noise Children's Choir, for instance. They're great ambassadors for Rehoboth, raising money and awareness with their album and their tours."

The 17-year-old choir began raising funds for Rehoboth 10 years ago, when a first album, *Kids for Kids*, raised \$24,000. *All the Way to Bethlehem*, a second recording, released this past November (see CC, Dec. 8), has already sold well over 1,000 copies, the proceeds of which are also going to Rehoboth.

Producing an album and marketing it can be a daunting

task, Joyful Noise's director Rein Selles discovered. After the initial tapes for *All the Way to Bethlehem* were completed, Selles and his team tried to find a Christian record company willing to take over the post-production tasks, but nobody showed any interest.

"I was really disappointed in their attitudes," says Selles. "Marketing and distributing it ourselves took a tremendous amount of time and effort. But, of course, by doing it ourselves, we have a lot more money to give to Rehoboth."

World's longest marine bridge now under construction in P.E.I.

CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I. (Canadian Scene) — The Northumberland Strait bridge is now under construction; construction began late last fall. When completed sometimes in 1997 the bridge will link New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

With a total length of 12.9 kilometres, the bridge will be the world's longest continuous

marine span, and for the first time will permit vehicles to be driven between the two provinces.

At a cost of more than \$800 million the construction of the bridge will involve 2,000 people, with an additional 2,000 being employed by subcontractors to provide materials or services.

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Editorial

It must be cold being prime minister of urgent affairs

By now, it has become painfully clear that Prime Minister Jean Chretien and his Liberals have no clear vision to offer Canada for its health and unity. A month after the Quebec referendum, Chretien promised a unity package that had all the appearances of being improvised on the spot. The distinct society resolution and veto legislation now being rushed through Parliament do not show that the government carefully thought through all the consequences of the package. The initial lumping together of B.C. with the three prairie provinces for a regional veto indicated how hasty and imprudent the process has been.

We should not be surprised. Jean Chretien is at heart a pragmatist. He wants to be a winner, come what may. The first few years of his mandate have been spectacular by virtue of his lack of leadership. For a while it seemed that the less he did the more popular he became. But

if the aftermath of the referendum showed anything besides the fact that Quebec premier Jacques Parizeau was a bigot, it was that the emperor at 24 Sussex Drive has no clothes.

No reason for trust

In fact, his clothing became even more conspicuous by its absence during Question Period in the House of Commons. Preston Manning may have looked a little silly calling for an American-style impeachment process, but it was understandably frustrating for him not to have his questions answered by the Prime Minister, who just could not understand why Manning wanted to know where the Prime Minister's special powers would come from in the event of another vague referendum question. And so the Prime Minister stooped to call into question Manning's patriotism.

Just before Christmas, Mr. Chretien told Canadians that the country is facing a unity crisis but that Canadians can trust him to keep the country together. We believe that such trust in the Prime Minister would be sadly misplaced. The main reason is that he has not yet made the proper diagnosis of what's ailing this country.

We believe that someone like Elijah Harper, a Manitoba Cree Indian who halted the Meech Lake accord, has done a much better job of making the proper diagnosis. According to Harper, who recently became a Christian, the answer to what ails Canada is not social, economic or political reform, but spiritual renewal.

When Harper invited about 1,000 Native and non-Native political and religious leaders to attend Sacred Assembly '95, he asked the Prime Minister to deliver an opening address. According to a news report by *Calgary Herald* reporter Gordon Legge, Chretien read a non-committal speech and added a few impromptu words that acknowledged that the country had come at the unity question from every dimension except one — the spiritual. Unless that is brought into the equation, unity will not be achieved, Chretien said.

That may seem like a profound statement, but in the context of the Sacred Assembly, and seeing that it was not part of his prepared text, it sounded again like an improvised accommodation for the moment.

First order of business

What participants at Sacred Assembly '95 came to see with clarity, however, was that unity in Canada will not be achieved until there is a recognition that healing must start with Canada's Native peoples. Harper himself said that "if justice is to be done, if Canada is to have cultural and political harmony and peace, then it must first honor, respect and complete the first order of business, which is the

relationship with First Nations, the original people of this country."

How right he is. We must attend to our *first* order of business before we can assume to be able to heal what follows. When we do address the pain of those who are most vulnerable and least able to protect themselves, we lay a foundation of justice and mercy that will carry us through other crises, including the unity crisis between provinces and regions.

Sin loses out

There is something so right about this. When we lose our fear of the "crises" which the media is fond of enlarging, we will be able to direct our attention to the quieter waters of real need and real pain. We have to know the difference between the urgent and the essential. The urgent, like the telephone, always presents itself as needing attention right now, but may not be important. The essential gives the appearance of not needing to be addressed today or this week, but is the key to real growth and healing.

Our prime minister needs to be more strongly focused on principles of justice. Right now, Jean Chretien sounds like a spouse who wants to be reconciled to the other partner but refuses to address the issues that divide them.

We need to know as Canadians that "righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people." And pragmatism, with its inability to recognize sin and unwillingness to do justice, destroys countries. **BW**

What is pragmatism?

Pragmatism is a philosophy that tests the value and truth of ideas by their practical consequences. These practical consequences are usually short-term consequences. Pragmatism rejects the principled approach of those who believe that truth should lead actions. A right-principled approach may yield unpleasant short-term results but will eventually produce long-term beneficial outcomes.

The net result of pragmatism, according to Alan Storkey in *A Christian Social Perspective* "is obscurity and lack of clarity. It is not obvious where politicians stand, not just because the issues are complex, but because they do not accept that their positions are value-based.... Thus pragmatism, otherwise defined ... as 'steering by the seat of your pants,' creates a bogus fluidity."

Because of its supposed neutrality, pragmatism eliminates the possibility of principled opposition, adds Storkey. No wonder Preston Manning, who on the unity issue, at least, seems to take a principled stance, could not get through to Jean Chretien. **BW**

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Letters

A creche preferred over a tree in Forest

A year ago, Alyce Oosterhuis wrote in her column entitled "A creche among us" (Dec. 16, 1994) that the Reformed heritage does not usually include a creche among its Christmas decorations. "That would be too Roman Catholic for our Reformational beliefs, wouldn't it. We don't do it in our churches; we certainly wouldn't do it in our schools." Nevertheless, Oosterhuis suggests that "a Christ Child in the manger is a very concrete depiction of what the Christmas season is intended to celebrate. We should be constructing stables and mangers on all our front lawns and school yards so that all who pass will pause and reflect on why and what it is that we celebrate every December 25!"

In response to this column, Evert Wassink from Forest Ont.,

sent us a picture of a creche members of the Forest Christian Reformed Church have erected in their church, and he adds the following words:

Our worship committee decided some years ago that we needed some change in our Christmas decorations in the church. The result was a full-size Nativity scene painted and constructed by members of the congregation. It did send some forceful ripples through the congregation — pro and con. We came to the conclusion that it was a good biblical reflection of what we celebrate each Christmas and that it is a great improvement on past decorations, such as a Christmas tree.

And the issue of it being Roman Catholic or Reformed did not enter into the argument.

Evert Wassink
Forest, Ont.



CC FILES

How do you do?

Have we met?
Something about the eyes,
Perhaps. A certain light
I seem to recognize.

We're strangers, yet
There is a sort of grace —
Not strange to me —
That marks your spirit,
Lays a certain likeness
On your face.
I think we know each other.

Ah, yes —
Thy speech betrayeth thee!
You see ...
I know your Father.

Ruth Glover
The Dalles, Oregon

We needed that

Thank you for featuring Bill Van Dyk's "Politicizing 'family values.'" It is timely and needed to be said.

C. Van Egmond
Brampton

Recording participant takes issue with review

I am writing in response to Marian Van Til's critique (Christmas Issue) of *All the Way To Bethlehem* (Joyful Noise Children's Choir and Voce Humana, with Ken Medema). Perhaps Van Til should have done a little bit more homework before she wrote this review. The majority of the recording was done in the studio — a small, windowless room where over 70 children and adults spent a great deal of time together, patiently doing their best. Only a couple of the songs were recorded live at Trinity CRC.

Van Til tucked the whole point of the project into one sentence in the second paragraph where she minimally states: "The project was a benefit for Rehoboth Christian Ministries." This was the whole point of the project, the importance of which I feel was missed by her rambling on about how a choir should provide something extraordinary and that, "if it's a Christian choir, the pursuit of excellence should be a given."

I guess she is allowed to critique us; it's part of her job. But I feel she has left the reader with the impression that this recording isn't really worth buying because it's somehow inferior. That's unfortunate. I

think it's a wonderful recording. It provides the listener with a different repertoire of lesser-known Christmas music at a time when we are inundated with everyone's version of the familiar Christmas carols.

Hard work equals excellence?

I know just how much hard work, energy, effort and commitment went into this project. I have listened to it with a more critical ear than perhaps the

recreational listener because I was there. I am a member of Voce Humana, who, like the rest of the participants, volunteered their time with no physical reward, save for the satisfaction of knowing that we all tried our best, we believe in the cause we are trying to support, we love God and were singing for him, and we had a lot of fun in the process.

I suppose she might have been a little kinder had she really known what truly was in-

volved in this project and had focussed a little more on its purpose instead of criticizing the recording for its lack of professionalism.

Neither the Joyful Noise Children's Choir nor Voce Humana claim to be professional choirs. We were called by God to do our best, which we did, and we did it for him and for Rehoboth.

Sherryl Debree
Edmonton

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Stan de Jong
Manager

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Education

Interview/Book Review

One step ahead

EDUCATION

Alyce Oosterhuis



Someone once wisely stated (I cannot recall who it was): "Effective leaders manage to lead by being one step ahead of their followers; if they are two steps ahead, their followers cannot keep up; if they are half a step ahead, their followers will step on their heels and trample them; if they are in step with their followers, they are not leading." Since the quality of leadership has been a subject of much scrutiny and discussion in recent months, I think it is time to do some reflecting on educational leadership.

Many of those who are in positions of educational leadership today were educated in the late '60s and '70s. Those were heady times for more than just the 10 per cent of the college and university populations who dressed in beads and preached "Love, not war." They were daring times because we who were young then learned to dream in those days: dream of schools without failures; of leading students into responsible service; of making studies so relevant that no child would complain of boredom; of fully integrating a curriculum that was so immersed and directed by faith that God's Kingdom would claim the hearts of our students; of enabling all God's imagebearers to find their unique niche in this world; of smoothing school pathways to allow the most disabled students to share in this upbuilding climate.

Convinced they could make a difference

We graduated from various institutions and leaped into positions where we could make a difference. As we looked behind us in our educational community, we saw that there was a substantial throng following closely behind and with us. We were no more than one step ahead.

Unfortunately, because of the throng that pressed us to continue in the claimed direction, we never did see that there were masses of others in our following who were dragging their feet. And when we did see them, we beckoned them to follow in faith and to stop their doubting ways.

Twenty years later, I look at our leaders and observe that few of them continue to be one step ahead of any throng; many are walking in the place as their support groups, and decisions are made after much deliberation and group thinking. Many of the following throng have dropped out of service as they or their children have graduated to other causes.

Many drummers being followed

And the dubious masses of those days? They are still there, but they are beginning to follow other leaders. Feeling somewhat rudderless in previous decades, they have seized upon the latest drummers for their educational parades; the beat of the basics; the patterns of discipline; the emphasis on achievements; the demands of obedience; the censorship of language, literature and art; the accountability of receiving ones "money's worth."

Emerging new leaders are needed who will be able to rekindle the sparks of the previous decades while being sensitive to the changing drums: What is most basic in Christian education? To discipline is to nurture in love and respect. The love of God impels us to unfold our gifts in his service. To walk humbly is to follow in Christ's footsteps. Does anyone know where such leaders are emerging?

Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis has been involved in Christian education since the early '60s and sometimes feels she's been there, "done that."

Angels are everywhere

Angels and the New Spirituality

by Duane Garrett. New York: Broadman and Holman, 1995. 256 pp; softcover, \$19.

Gordon Legge

Angels are everywhere these days. Not that they haven't always been. But you know the winged messengers have made the big time when they're on the cover of *Life's* Christmas edition: "On the Trail of Angels: The Search for Meaning and Comfort in the Spiritual World."

While Christmas shopping, you couldn't help but notice they are the subject of everything from flighty figurines to colorful calendars. Just a few weeks ago a note arrived about a new bimonthly publication, *Angels on Earth*, true stories of angels helping people through real life crises, published by *Guideposts*, the world's largest inspirational magazine founded by Norman Vincent Peale. There's even a cable TV program on The Learning Channel called *Miracles and Other Wonders*, many of which are also said to be true accounts of angels.

How do you sort out all this angel stuff? *Angels and the New Spirituality* written by Duane Garrett, a professor of Hebrew and Old Testament at the Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary in Cochrane, is a good place to start.

As he told the *Baptist Horizon*, "On the surface, the new love of angels brings us back to God, but beneath the halos and wings we find a confusing maze of superstition and legend as well as biblical faith."

Distinguishing biblical fact from cultural fiction

Garrett hopes to be helpful by distinguishing between what the Bible says from what the popular culture is proclaiming.

The book provides a comprehensive overview beginning with angels in the Bible, the question of Satan, and angels' role in the life of Jesus Christ.

Garrett looks at their history leading up to the present, concluding with an examination of New Age angels. He talks about how Jews, Catholics and Protestants regard angels. There are angel anecdotes and angels in evangelical novels, from C.S. Lewis's *Screwtop Letters* to

Frank Peretti's *This Present Darkness*.

Finally, he deals with the much-discussed topic of spiritual warfare.

Garrett takes a decidedly Christian perspective on the bearers of good news. His book is an intelligent and balanced look at what both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures have to say on the subject. He's open but cautious.

Angels are a subject that deserves some restraint in our culture. Not all that appears in the night is necessarily angelic.

Garrett notes that both Christians and non-Christians cite the Bible frequently on the subject.



"Every angel book I looked at, to some degree, looked to the Bible to provide direction and teaching on what angels are like," he said in an interview. "All of them seek to get the Bible on their side."

What Garrett endeavored to do was to read the Bible and see what it did and did not have to say on the subject.

Garrett's book is not always in agreement with what modern angel proponents are saying, but it puts the reader in a better position to make a biblically informed decision.

Warm, fuzzy answer to spiritual hunger

The current consuming interest in angels is much like what happened when Jesus Christ walked the earth 2,000 years ago. People are unsettled. They're looking for spiritual solutions. Angels are viewed as spiritual beings who provide protection.

Angelophilia, as Garrett calls it, is crossing all boundaries. People from every area of life, from academics to zookeepers,

are indulging in angels. "While I may disagree pretty strongly with what they are doing, this is not a lunatic fringe. They're not stupid," he says.

People in the West have passed through a secular age in which the gods of science, education and technology have failed to provide answers. "People have become disillusioned with the secular world as a guide to ultimate truth," Garrett says. Moreover, secular culture has created considerable mistrust of the church and traditional religion. God is viewed as distant and remote, abstract, and yet judgmental.

Hence people are hungry for spiritual life in alternative forms. Angels fit the bill. They orbit somewhere in between — closer, warmer, friendlier. Not to mention familiar. The Bible exhorts people to avoid consorting with "familiar spirits," which might be regarded as deceptive aliens.

While Garrett touches on the topic, he says to regard angelic contact as falling into the realm of familiar spirits is too glib a response. He's not about to say that if you mess around with spirits, you might end up with demons. Angels do exist.

'The main point is God'

In that regard, Garrett says people generally take one of two approaches:

* Demons exist but if you leave them alone, they won't bother you; only if you invoke them will they come into your life.

* The other is a more cautious acknowledgment that demons are deceptive and you must use guidelines to evaluate your experience.

Garrett thinks that's naive. The main issue is not good spirits versus evil spirits. "It's dangerous to seek the aid of small 's' spirits," he says. "We should seek our spiritual guidance from God."

Even if there were some way of guaranteeing whether you've contacted a good angel or an evil spirit, the most important thing to remember is that the focus ought to be on God, rather than angels.

"Belief in angels, awareness of angels, enriches the Christian faith." But it's not the main point. The main point is God.

"Anything that distracts from the main point is a little bit dangerous," asserts Garrett.

Christian murder mystery paints an intriguing picture of heaven

Marian Van Til

Deadline: A Novel

By Randy Alcorn.

Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Books, 1995. ISBN 0-88070-660-0. 427 pp. \$10.99 US; \$14.99 Cdn.

Deadline is a Christian novel whose author, Randy Alcorn, is currently an evangelical pastor and who was formerly a jour-

nalist. Both of those occupations inform the story. This is a story of intense male friendship, of meeting and shirking familial responsibilities, of evidence of God's guiding hand, and of a painful journey towards faith before the ultimate "deadline." It is at the same time a murder mystery.

A skillful mystery weaver

Alcorn is skillful at weaving bits of the mystery together with gradually more bits of the protagonists' personalities and

syndrome. This is a story of intense male friendship, of meeting and shirking familial responsibilities, of evidence of God's guiding hand, and of a painful journey towards faith before the ultimate "deadline." It is at the same time a murder mystery.

to view the military or multiculturalism, is only one approach, and not necessarily the most thoughtful, biblical approach. The other element one could take issue with is that Alcorn uses his novel as a kind of extended tracts. Its major purpose seems to be to evangelize. Evangelism is, of course, essential to our tasks as Christians. But a novel's primary function is literary, which by definition makes it symbolic and suggestive rather than didactic and evangelistic (with an ulterior motive which overtly promotes whatever the author's religious presuppositions are).

A compelling view of heaven

If you can get past those things — and you tend to because the story is so well written — Alcorn tells an extraordinary story. While people normally read entire novels, the book would be worth reading if only for the section in which Alcorn offers a speculative (of course!) but strangely affective and biblically informed description of angels, of heaven and what might be happening there. (One is reminded somewhat of C.S. Lewis; august company indeed.)

Alcorn's descriptions are must reading for a Christian who fears death, who has been devastated by the loss of a loved one, or who doubts God's workings in his or her life (or in all of creation, including the spiritual realm).

Perhaps Alcorn's best insight is that there is growth in heaven (and such growth!); we don't get to heaven and automatically know everything; if we did we would be as God; nor would there be much left to do in terms of serving him.

Even the angels are learners. Alcorn sees a wonderful reciprocal relationship between us humans and the angels. Finney is as much in awe of the angel Zyor who is assigned to him, and of his peculiar kind of servanthood, as Zyor is envious (in a pure sort of way) of Finney's humanity: Christ died for Finney, something Zyor can't claim.

If you're looking for a novel that is both intriguing and edifying, this one qualifies.

Media/Arts



An excerpt from *Deadline*

Finney could see the luminous wonder in the deep-set eyes of the mighty warrior, who seemed at times tutor, philosopher, bard, and poet. Suddenly he realized Zyor was gazing deep into his own eyes, as if he saw something equally remarkable within Finney.

"I long to understand what it means that you, my master, were created in his image. There is something of his very essence in you. Something that permits you to see things that elude my grasp. For now, at least." Zyor's voice took on a wistful tone as he added, "But I think perhaps forever. For there are things about Elyon's relationship with you, things which my kind shall always long to look into, which we may never understand.

"At the heart of the mystery, etched forever in my mind is that incredible day," Zyor's voice lowered to a whisper, "when Elyon stepped through the portal of eternity and left our world for yours. Creation was a wonder, but not a miracle. It pales in comparison to the true miracle, that he would become ... one of you. The Creator becoming the creature. It could not be. And yet it was. It could not happen. And yet it did."

As he beheld the wonder in Zyor's eyes, Finney realized the angel was unconsciously demonstrating the very concept he had earlier expressed — the joy of learning, and the marvel of pondering what he might never understand.

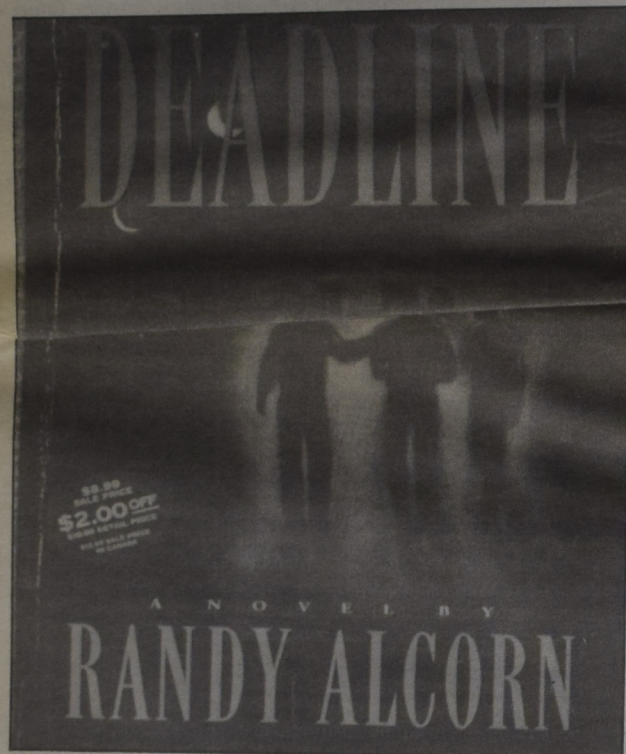
"For a long time, as earth's history progressed, certain things seemed predictable. My comrades and I began to think we knew what would happen next, that we understood Elyon's plan. Then, in a moment, our presumption lay shattered. We realized we knew nothing of the ways of God. We had not comprehended the unfolding drama of redemption. It was a terrible realization to learn how little we knew, even having been with him for so long. Terrible, yet," and Finney saw a faint but distinct smile, "wonderful."

"He became one of you. Not merely like you as I myself have done, but one of you. Not for a moment, but for a lifetime ... and for eternity. God became man. While Gabriel announced the miracle on earth, Michael announced it to us. I will never forget his words as he pointed through the portal and we gazed upon that teenage girl. You will meet her eventually, master Finney.

"When Michael saw the shock on our faces," Zyor continued, "he added simply, 'Elyon has become a human child. The Son of God is now the Son of Man.'"

Finney marveled not only at what Zyor was telling him, but that the angel had never ceased to wonder at an event millions on earth affirmed in their doctrinal statements with such little wonder at all, with hardly more than a second thought. To Zyor Christmas was not making a list and shopping at a mall. It was the heart and soul of the cosmos itself.

"And just when we thought Elyon could not surpass this greatest miracle with another, there came the greater one." Zyor stood, and his voice trembled, not only with awe, but now with unmistakable anger.



nalist. Both of those occupations inform the story.

The main character, Jake Woods, is a journalist — a syndicated columnist based at a city newspaper in Oregon. He's divorced, a workaholic and a kind of cynical, lapsed Christian who hovers between the philosophical worlds of his two best and life-long friends: Doc, the ever-confident, self-sufficient, upwardly mobile (married) lady's man who has no use for religion; and straight-talking Finney, a businessman who is defined, not by his work, but by his joyful evangelical Christianity and by his wife and family, among whom are a son, "Little Finn," with Down's

experiences. He shifts settings, times — and even dimensions — effortlessly.

Deadline is gripping enough that you won't easily put the book down. The story draws you in quickly and hooks you. At the same time, many Reformed readers will, as I did, have to suppress periodic annoyance with the author's very conservative politics — with his assumptions about the Christian view on various current issues.

Not that most CC readers will disagree with all of Alcorn's assumptions, particularly with regard to abortion. But sometimes what Alcorn sees as the Christian view on issues such as male/female relations, or how



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Church

Scholars unite to disseminate Dutch theology

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (DRTS) — Twelve men in western Michigan have established the Dutch Reformed Translation Society. Laypeople, pastors and academicians, all are familiar with the literature of the Dutch Reformed tradition and are committed to making the best of it available in English.

The founders are members of five different Reformed denominations: Christian Reformed, Reformed Church in America, Protestant Reformed, Netherlands Reformed and Free Reformed.

Among them are professors on three different seminary faculties. The board members are united in their appreciation of a common Dutch Reformed theological legacy. As a result, the society has an ecumenical dimension.

Bavinck first

The first project, already well underway, is the English translation of Dr. Herman Bavinck's four-volume work on systematic theology. Bavinck (1854-1921) was a contemporary and close associate of Abraham Kuyper and excelled Kuyper as a theologian. Bavinck's work is regarded as superior in many ways to the work of Louis Berkhof and

G.C. Berkouwer, both of whom relied substantially on Bavinck. This translation, an \$80,000 project, will be the first complete translation of Bavinck's systematic theology.

The first publication will be a selection from Bavinck's work that deals with the doctrine of the last things, or eschatology. It is due to appear in the spring of 1996. Baker Book House in Grand Rapids is the publisher.

Gems obscured by language barrier

After completing the Bavinck project, the society will move on to other worthwhile devotional and doctrinal literature. Dutch Reformed theology, the board believes, offers the most mature and comprehensive development of the Calvinian or Reformed faith available, but has been kept from wider Christian readership by the relative obscurity of the Dutch language.

Membership in the society is open to all who pay a one-time membership fee of \$100. This assures members of newsletters on forthcoming projects as well as substantial discounts on pre-publication prices for all society projects. The address is: Dutch Reformed Translation Society, P.O. Box 7083, Grand Rapids, MI 49510.



Dutch Translation Society board members, seated (l to r): Dr. Richard Muller, P.J. Zondervan Professor of Doctoral Studies, Calvin Theological Seminary (secretary); Rev. Peter Vander Meyden, pastor, Free Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Mich. (president); Dr. John Bolt, professor of systematic theology, Calvin Seminary (executive editor); Mr. David Engelsma, professor of theology, Protestant Reformed Seminary (treasurer).

Standing (l to r): Dr. James A. De Jong, president, Calvin Seminary; Dr. Joel Beeke, pastor, Heritage Netherlands Reformed Congregation, Grand Rapids; Dr. Eugene Oosterhaven, emeritus professor of systematic theology, Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Mich.; Dr. Arthur De Boer, retired surgeon, Grand Haven, Mich.; Dr. I. John Hesselink, Albertus C. Van Raalte Professor of Systematic Theology, Western Seminary; Dr. John R. De Witt, pastor, Seventh Reformed Church, Grand Rapids; Mr. Allan Fisher, Baker Books Inc.; Mr. Henk I. Witte, president, Witte Travel, and Consul of the Government of the Netherlands.

World prayer centre begun

Dan Wooding

COLORADO SPRINGS, Col. (ASSIST) — Some 160 million Christians worldwide will be connected by an extraordinary "nerve centre" using the latest in electronic technology when the World Prayer Center in Colorado Springs, Col., becomes a reality next fall.

The ground-breaking for the 45,000 square foot facility took place on Dec. 3 on the grounds of the New Life Church here.

The three ministries to be headquartered in the World Prayer Center are the Sentinel Group, Global Harvest Ministries, and the Christian Information Center, an outreach of New Life Church, which is pastored by Ted Haggard, the man who envisioned the centre.

Effectively linking believers

Global Harvest's C. Peter Wagner, who is also a professor at the Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., stated, "For too long Christians have been divided and poorly informed. Now as we harness the exploding information superhighway, we can effectively link believers in knowledge and in prayer. Our goal is to vastly improve the quantity and quality of prayer as we approach the end of this tumultuous century."

Wagner added, "We selected Colorado Springs for this vital prayer centre because I believe God has anointed this city as a global evangelical communications centre for the 21st century. We have the North American Aerospace Defense Command located in nearby Cheyenne Mountain, and I agree with those who feel that God is building a spiritual equivalent in the shadow of this military nerve centre."

Mobilized for 'critical prayer needs'

"It is anticipated that over 160 million Christians from around the world will soon be [connected] with this nerve centre," says Beverly Pegues of the Christian Information Network. "As a result of this, information can be shared quickly and in minutes and teams around the world can be mobilized to focus prayer on critical prayer needs, armed with the latest facts and intelligence briefs."

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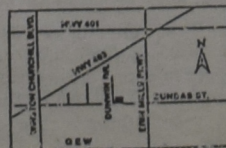
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2,000 year old synagogue discovered

JERUSALEM, Israel (EP) — An archaeologist in Israel says he's uncovered what may be a 2,000-year-old synagogue.

The structure, at the site near the West Bank Jewish Settlement of Kiryat Sefer, is similar to two other synagogues uncovered by archaeologists at Masada and Gamla, Reuters news service has reported.

Israeli television showed pictures of the structure, which included pillars and benches. Silver and gold pieces have also been recovered from the site, which some experts believe to be 1,800 years old.

JANUARY 5, 1996

Church

A New Year's party in Babylon

"King Belshazzar gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them" (Dan. 5:1, NIV).

Different cultures celebrate the New Year in different ways and at different times. In our culture we are all used to the convention that the New Year begins on January 1 (a convention which is only a few hundred years old in most Western countries). But we are aware of the fact that the Chinese New Year begins on a different date, and that the Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashanah) is different again — in 1995 it was on September 25.

The Jewish calendar has a much more ancient pedigree than the one we are used to. It is a lunar calendar which the Hebrews adopted from the Babylonians during the Babylonian Exile in the sixth century B.C. The Babylonians, in turn, had used it for centuries before that.

The Jews also adopted another feature of the Babylonian calendar: the distinction between the civil and the religious year. Just as we may have a fiscal or academic year which starts on a different date than January 1, the Babylonians had a religious year beginning in the spring, and a civil year beginning in the fall, six months later. They therefore had two New Year's Days every year, celebrated in an elaborate ceremony known as the *akitu* festival.

It was especially the beginning of the religious New Year which was celebrated with a great deal of pomp and circumstance. The king of Babylon played a crucial role in the celebration, and the festivities were dedicated to Marduk, the chief god of the Babylonian pantheon.

Promoting a new god

How does all of this relate to the story of Belshazzar's feast in Daniel 5, the feast at which the disembodied hand wrote the mysterious message on the wall?

It turns out that the date of this famous episode coincides with the date of the second New Year's festival in Babylon, and was part of a religious revolution that was taking place in the Babylonian Empire at that time. It has to do with the eccentric king who was Belshazzar's father, and with the religious politics of the last years of his reign.

Belshazzar's father was Nabonidus (not Nebuchadnezzar, who was probably Belshazzar's grandfather). This Nabonidus was unusual among Babylonian kings in that he sought to replace Marduk as chief god with the moon-god Sin. He even attempted to convert the great temple dedicated to Marduk in Babylon to the worship of the moon god.

Nabonidus was so busy with this unusual campaign on behalf of his favorite deity that he made his son Belshazzar "associate king" in charge of most of the ordinary royal duties. He also boycotted the spring *akitu* festival at the beginning of the religious year, which was dedicated to Marduk, not Sin.

There is a good deal of evidence that Nabonidus favored, instead, the fall *akitu* festival, which he associated with the worship of Sin. It is this festival, celebrated in October, 539 B.C., which is the setting of the great feast described in Daniel 5. As it happens, the date of that festival was chosen to coincide with the appearance of either the "harvest moon" or "hunter's moon" — the two occasions in the year when the full moon rises at the same time the sun is setting for several nights running, and thus has the whole night to itself.

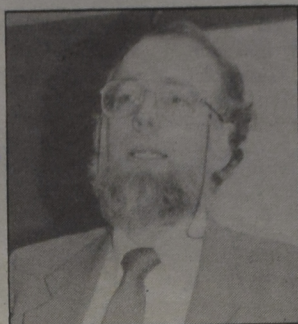
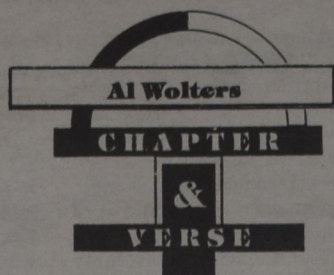
The beginning of the civil New Year, together with its festival, was thus associated with a date when the moon-god Sin was at his most glorious.

A jealous God reacts

Belshazzar's feast thus represents a New Year's party in honor of a pagan deity, a party whose pagan character became especially clear when the vessels of the Jerusalem temple were used to honor pagan deities.

It was at that party that the God of Israel, by sending the ominous handwriting on the wall, and by giving Babylon into the hands of the Persians, made a mockery of the religious revolution which Nabonidus and Belshazzar were seeking to promote. Instead, God promoted his own religious revolution by giving power to Cyrus the Persian, who was to be God's instrument in letting his chosen people return to the promised land.

Al Wolters teaches Bible and classical languages at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. He recently published a scholarly article entitled "Belshazzar's Feast and the Cult of the Moon God, Sin."



Billy Graham to skip Australia/New Zealand festival due to ill health

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. (BGEA) — Evangelist Billy Graham has announced that, at the recommendation of his doctors and the direction of his board, he is cancelling his previously announced plans to travel to Australia and New Zealand to preach at Festival '96, an evangelistic outreach originally scheduled for February and March 1996.

"My heart is broken that I cannot join with the Christians in Australia and New Zealand in fulfilling their progressive vision to take the Gospel to the marketplace," Graham said. "I share their burden for reaching people in an increasingly secularized society and want to assure the churches there that we stand with them as they continue to demonstrate the relevance of the Good News in their communities."

Graham called on people everywhere to pray for the

hundreds of churches of all denominations in Australia and New Zealand, that there may begin an international renewal and restoration of leadership, relevance and impact of the church on society — across the South Pacific and beyond.

David Godby, Festival '96 co-ordinator, said, "We are thankful to God for the life and ministry of Dr. Graham and what God has done through him for Australia. God has begun a work among us, thanks to the preparation for Festival '96."

Several years ago Graham was diagnosed as having Parkinson's disease, which his physicians at the Mayo Clinic felt would intensify should he go. The trip would have required a long flight, adjustments across many time zones and two months away from home, separated from his primary health support system.

Hinn healings a 'tall tale'

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (EP) — Charismatic leader Benny Hinn's story of mass healings at an Ontario hospital in 1976 is largely fabricated, according to the St. Louis-based organization Personal Freedom Outreach. In the organization's *Quarterly Journal*, G. Richard Fisher calls Hinn's story of the healings, published in Hinn's *Welcome Holy Spirit*, a "tall tale."

Hinn says that when he and other clergy anointed patients in a Catholic hospital with oil they "began to receive instant healing." Hinn, who pastors the

10,000-member Orlando Christian Center, added, "Within a few minutes the hospital looked almost like it had been hit by an earthquake. People were under the power of the Holy Spirit up and down the hallways as well as in the rooms."

According to Fisher, the hospital in question issued a statement saying, "No such events have ever occurred at General Hospital." Fisher said Hinn's claims could not be verified through medical records or by testimony from past or present hospital staffers.

Luther Bible found

BONN, Germany (EP) — The Latin Bible that church reformer Martin Luther used for his translating the holy book into German has been found by a librarian in Stuttgart, Germany. The volume, which has been lost for more than 200 years, is signed by Luther and is covered with notes he made during the translation process.

The Bible was among thousands of other Bibles stored

at the Wuertemberg State Library in Stuttgart before it was discovered by librarian Manuel Santos-Noya. Apparently, the Bible was purchased unknowingly along with 5,000 other Bibles in 1784 by the Duke of Wuertemberg.

It was identified when the library began to catalog its collection. Luther translated the New Testament from Latin into German in 1522.

Book Review

'Fundamental questions we can ill afford to ignore'

Beyond Poverty and Affluence: Towards a Canadian Economy of Care

By Bob Goudzwaard and Harry de Lange.

Translated and edited by Mark VanderVennen, with a foreword by Maurice F. Stang. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995, 173 pp. Reviewed by William van Vuuren, who teaches economics at the University of Guelph.

This book by two Dutch economists is a plea for radical economic change. Both rich and poor countries are plagued by agonizing problems: poverty, environmental degradation, unemployment, a decrease in the quality of work, and huge government debts. These problems have become structural, immune to the prevailing prescription, "economic growth."

The authors thoroughly analyze what has gone wrong in economic science and in our culture. Then they urge a course correction toward "an economy of enough."

The book has three parts. The first is an extensive description of the problems. The second analyzes the origins of those problems, and presents an outline of solutions and a defence against objections raised to the proposed economic renewal. The last section lays down 12 steps needed to reach the goal of a renewed Canadian economy.

Articles of a questionable faith

Economics based on unsound assumptions has exerted a dominant influence on thought patterns in our culture. Some of these assumptions are: that labor has no intrinsic value; that human needs are limitless and not subject to economic investigation; that technological development is accepted as a given; that the market is the best guide to further human welfare.

Thought and behavior patterns based on those theories lead to ignoring "need" appraisal, a lack of economic accountability (responsibility), a neglect of items that are not traded in markets (such as the environment), and a reduc-

tionist view of human labor as nothing more than a production factor that has value only in so far as it generates income through the market.

Elevation of economic growth as a means to a happier life and a cure for unemployment, poverty, government deficits and environmental degradation has become an important article of faith arising from such thought patterns.

Shared responsibility

The proposed reorientation of Western economies entails:

1) redefining priorities away from increased consumption of material goods for the rich towards meeting essential needs of the poor and those of quality of life ("care" needs);

2) establishing economic accountability for economic destruction (inflation, unemployment, environmental degradation and the like) inflicted on third parties by economic decisions;

3) redistributing economic power away from a structure that stimulates a continual increase in material goods and "non-caring" services towards an order of shared responsibility in which those advocating "care" needs must participate in economic decision-making and where all sectors of the economy share responsibility for their economic actions.

Painted in black and white

The book deals with some fundamental questions that we can ill afford to ignore. The authors expose many idols and false assumptions in economic life that the public, most Christians included, have subscribed to. This is not to say that the book offers all the answers, neither that it is well-balanced in its analysis.

The problems and solutions are painted in black and white without appreciation for any other color. Our destiny, for example, appears to be determined largely by the available "fixed" amount of resources in (on) the earth, implying that our economic growth always happens at the expense of that of the Third World and future generations. No mention is made of the ongoing expansion of the human mind which can lessen these constraints considerably.

Another example refers to work quality. The authors allege that this has deteriorated during the process of economic growth. This is a phenomenon difficult to substantiate universally. Technological change has greatly advanced work quality as well. It has eliminated many physically demanding tasks and much menial labor.

Moreover, what is one going to make of such a statement in light of a survey published in the *Globe and Mail* (Nov. 7, 1995) in which 77 per cent of

nologies. As in most of their analyses, the reasoning and outcome are one-sided. Only good ensues from these changes.

However, almost any change results in both positive and negative effects. Introducing labor-intensive technologies in agriculture, for example, would wipe out a large part of the industry (thus leading to widespread unemployment), would substantially lower the standard of living for the remainder of the industry, and would reintroduce drudgery and physically demanding jobs.

What needs to be done is to weigh the "goods" and "bads" of any change against each other. Markets are obviously not sufficient to guide us in this situation. The authors are silent on how to counsel us in this matter, because trade-offs are scarcely mentioned.

The writers underestimate the importance of the global economy as a hindrance to Canadian economic renewal, which is not in tandem with that in the rest of the world. Industries competing in world markets are hard pressed to

resist changes that would make them non-competitive. Inability to compete in world markets may result in economic destruction that could far outweigh any gains that economic renewal may confer.

The most important imperative for economic renewal is a change in motives, desires and aspirations of economic participants, which translate into simpler lifestyles and transformed economic structures.

Whether economic renewal can be accomplished without a basic change in human nature is a crucial question. The authors appear to be optimistic about humankind's ability to change. It is one thing to condemn greed and self-interest as authentic, legitimate traits of economics, but quite another to postulate that people, through their own effort, are capable of changing from greedy and self-interested

to generous and altruistic, as the authors do by referring to the ambivalence of human nature. Achieving economic renewal in a thoroughly secular society requires more than appealing to people's senses.

The blueprint offered is not entirely apparent. It appears that the authors advocate some kind of static society in the Western world from which quantitative growth has ceased and due emphasis is placed on the qualitative aspects of life.

Their analogy between an ideal society and a fruit tree is striking. Once the tree is full-grown it stops growing and directs its efforts to the production of fruit. Society should do likewise: stop growing and bearing fruit for others.

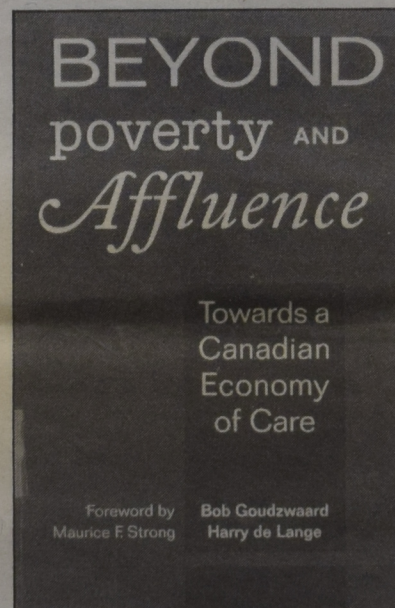
Questions and insights

This analogy begs several questions. Once this stage is reached, the fruit tree repeats its production in the same fashion. Does this imply that all possibilities placed in Creation are then unfolded and our cultural mandate fulfilled when society has reached this state? Is there no technological progress in such a state, or only progress which unequivocally enhances the quality of life?

Does this exclude the quantitative component entirely? Is it conceivable to produce change in a sinful world that is exclusively positive? If not, should it be resisted? If so, then a completely stationary world would emerge.

Despite many questions that remain, Goudzwaard and de Lange provide highly important insights. A particularly eye-opener is their disclosure of false and unscriptural assumptions and theories on which our economic life is based. This volume merits wide circulation, especially among politicians, business and labor leaders, business schools and social science departments. But it should also be read by everyone interested in economic life and its renewal.

Much creative thinking, work and persuasion are required to renew our economy. The authors have provided an excellent starting point from which to launch a full consideration and broad discussion of relevant issues pertaining to economic renewal.



Canadian employees state that their jobs provide a sense of personal accomplishment? In actuality, the outcome is twofold. Economic growth and technological advance have increased and decreased labor quality simultaneously.

Little mention of technological advance

This volume contains remarkably little on technological advance. This is surprising since such advance is one of the prominent forces behind economic growth. Without technological change, economic growth as we know it is hardly possible.

The authors champion responsible intermediate technologies which are environmentally sound, promote work quality and appear to be considerably more labor-intensive than currently prevailing tech-

Feature

Voices at the horizon: An interview with economist Bob Goudzwaard

Canadians everywhere are wrestling with profound questions about our economy and society. Increasingly, the debate carries a sense of frustration at the apparent lack of solutions to the fiscal, social and environmental problems of our time.

Together with colleague Harry de Lange, Christian economist Bob Goudzwaard has entered a timely new book into the public debate. *Beyond Poverty and Affluence: Towards a Canadian Economy of Care* (see review on previous page) is a detailed, clear and popularly written argument for economic alternatives to resolve the problems of poverty, environmental degradation and unemployment. Unprecedented in scope, the book, while written specifically for Canada, is part of a worldwide movement for fundamental economic reform.

Gerald Vandezande, public affairs director of Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ), recently spoke with Dr. Goudzwaard, who is professor of economics and social philosophy at the Free University of Amsterdam, and a consultant to CPJ. Here is an excerpt from their conversation:

Gerald Vandezande

Vandezande: Bob, you talk about new and different ways of thinking about economics and economic life. Do you see any real evidence of people beginning to realize that a more equitable, stewardly use of resources for all of humanity is needed? Do you see such an awareness developing among economists, who usually control the way political decision-makers deal with crises? Or are the problems so big that they seem impossible to overcome?

Goudzwaard: Today's problems are, at least, perplexing more and more economists because the problems have become paradoxical. For example, contrary to economists' own predictions, poverty is increasing in some parts of the world, and the chaos of financial markets casts doubt over the creation of a European monetary market. And that leads to new types of reflections.

At least some economists are then becoming aware that their own worldview may be part of the problem. Economists think solely in terms of mechanisms — market mechanisms, financial mechanisms, budget mechanisms. Even then, when studying the operation of a mechanism, economists do not speak about "actors" in a mechanism — such as banks, labor unions and governments — but only about "processes" and their development.

Now, however, new trends in economic thought suggest that the mechanist view of economic reality may actually hamper us because today's problems are more than mechanical. Elements of organic economic thinking are returning to economic studies, while the role of "actors" is becoming increasingly prominent.

"The sense of loyalty and of the fact that 'actors' can misbehave in the market is much more developed in the South than in the West."

For example, one of the most respected economists of our time, Amartya Sen from India, wrote a book in which he makes clear that you cannot explain the rise of poverty without analyzing the behavior of "actors" such as governments and land owners. That raises the possibility that actors can behave irresponsibly. And if that is the case, then ought we not to re-examine the role of institutions like the International Monetary Fund, for example, or of blocs of countries, in relation to poverty?

Have we not trusted the mechanisms to do the work for

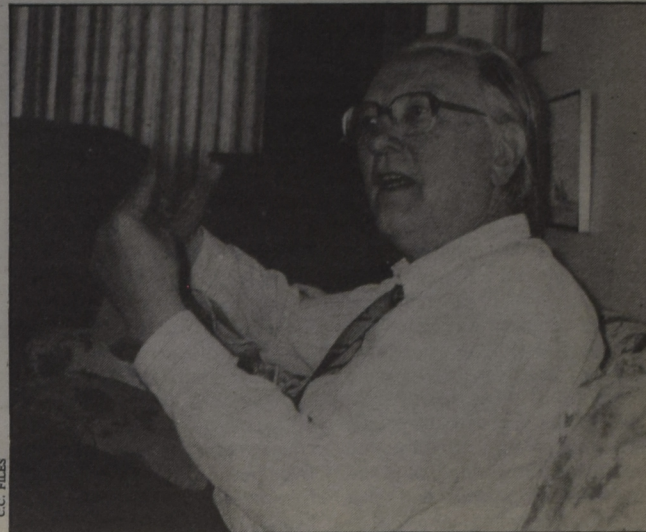
us, thereby avoiding the question of what monetary and economic responsibilities exist in today's world? This line of questioning can contribute to the solution to today's problems because with it the issues of responsibility and accountability re-enter economic life. To what extent, for example, can the poverty of the South be explained in terms of an accountability of the states, banks and instruments of the North?

Vandezande: Generally in the West, we've said that the South needs to learn from us, and that economists have a lot to teach the Third World. What can we learn from the Third World in connection with mechanisms, processes and "actors"?

Goudzwaard: Not long ago I attended a conference in India. There it was clear that the people of the South have an understanding of the market that has been present throughout all of civilization. For them markets are places of meeting people. A collision of interests may occur in markets, but never in the context of anonymity. The sense of loyalty and of the fact that "actors" can misbehave in the market is much more developed in the South than in the North. The understanding of the market held by economists and politicians in the North is entirely different. In the North we speak about closed, mechanical, anonymous mechanisms, where your sins are already forgiven before you have committed them. So we have a lot to learn from the South.

Think of the studies now appearing about why the Russian economic reforms have not worked, contrary to the predictions made by Harvard economists. The studies suggest that because the economists' short-sighted, mechanical worldview has been implemented in a different culture where the institutions of the market have not developed, the "reforms" have merely led to more ruin than before.

So we need to discuss the extent to which our own scientific worldview has contributed to today's problems instead of solved them. And that question applies to the effects of the unco-ordinated flows of capital



Bob Goudzwaard

in our own capitalist societies, including the impact of those flows on government debt levels. Capital flows are not just a neutral instrument. Rather, actors are leading economic processes towards what they want to see happen, and those actors must now be lifted out of anonymity and become visible to some extent, so that they can be addressed.

and elsewhere — to those who are responsible for what is happening. That, to me, is one of the most hopeful signs of our time. At first their message may be difficult to hear — people sometimes even walk out of meetings — but if you continue, well, you are speaking for the majority of the world's population.

Think of South Africa.

"Studies suggest that because the economists' short-sighted, mechanical worldview has been implemented in a culture where the market institutions have not developed the, 'reforms' have merely led to more ruin than before."

Vandezande: You have painted a pretty dark picture. Do you see signs of hope that people in the West are coming to their senses and beginning to realize that a new alternative is required?

Goudzwaard: I see signs of hope in gatherings where different non-government organizations (NGOs) meet together. Increasingly NGOs are seeing that it is in their interests simply to tell the story of what is happening. NGOs, including churches, are crossing borders, meeting and jointly, movingly articulating what must be said in Washington, Berlin, Brussels

People said that the government would never share its power. But the majority led by a responsible leadership on the black side, gradually turned that whole strong edifice in a different direction, and now a responsible black leader is the head of the nation and the whites are coming to their senses.

Perhaps something like that can also happen on a world scale. The highly articulate voices of the South are beginning to penetrate to the depths of our own political, financial, G-7 decisions. The world needs to listen to those voices.

Feature

Cyprus: visiting the ancestral homeland

Joy and melancholy in a long-delayed 'home coming'

Part Four

During the months of June and July, David Koyzis travelled with his fiancée, Dr. Nancy Calvert, with another couple and their children, and a group of 44 Wheaton College students to the eastern Mediterranean region. Their journey began in Greece and took them to Israel, Jordan, Egypt and finally to Rome, where the Wheaton tour ended. Following the completion of the formal part of the tour, Koyzis and Calvert spent two weeks on the island of Cyprus, where David's father was born. In this fourth and final article, Koyzis recounts their visit to this island.

David Koyzis

Would I be exhibiting too much bias if I observe that Cyprus was by far the most pleasant country we visited last summer? Despite its geographical proximity to the Middle East, the island is spiritually a part of Europe and its people are enterprising, friendly and courteous. Flowering plants and trees are widespread, and even the weeds poking up between the cracks of the sidewalks have lovely blossoms on them. Wild herbs grow everywhere and seem to thrive in the island's red copper soil and semi-arid climate.

My father was born here more than 60 years ago as part of the Greek Cypriot community. He was raised an Orthodox Christian, but he early became disillusioned with the Orthodox Church due to the role it played in the guerrilla war against British colonial rule. As a youth he attended the American Academy in Larnaca, a secondary school operated by the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America.

There he came into contact with Reformed Christianity.

I grew up hearing my father's stories about the island, including about his early childhood in the small village of Koma Yalou and his youth in the city of Famagusta. Yet it has taken me 40 years to actually visit the country where my ancestors had lived for millennia and to see for myself the things I had heard about all my life.

Nancy and I stayed with my father's eldest brother and his wife in the southern coastal city of Limassol. During our visit we spent time with other relatives in Larnaca and Dherynia, the latter of which lies just south of the Turkish-occupied city of Famagusta.

Ineffable beauty, unbearable sadness

Our two-week stay on Cyprus was both joyful and melancholy. It was a joy to be in a place of such ineffable beauty and to visit so many landmarks built by my forebears. These include the ancient Tombs of the Kings in Paphos and the Church of St.

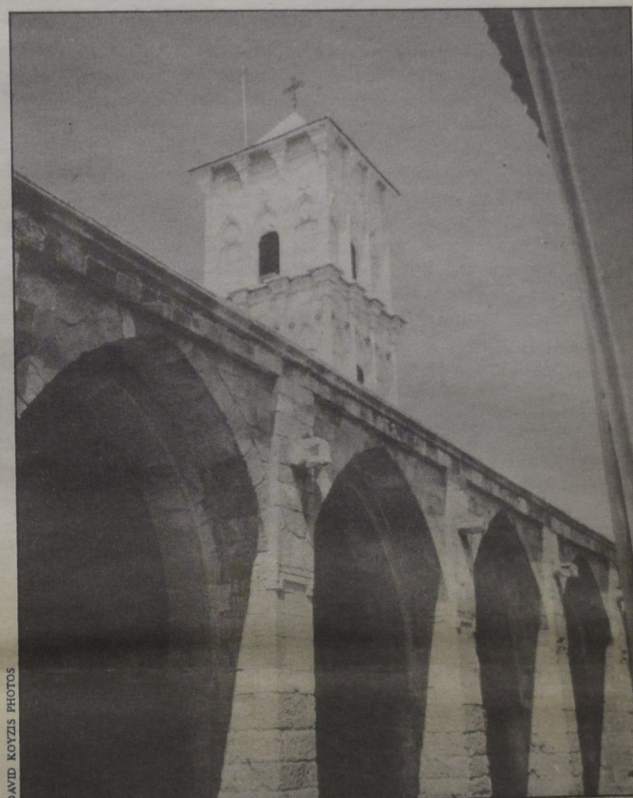
Lazarus in Larnaca, which claims to house the remains of one of the few human beings to die twice. It was moving to hear folk songs sung in the distinctive Cypriot dialect of Greek, and to see the people dance to these centuries-old strains.

Yet at times I felt myself overwhelmed by almost unbearable sadness. Because Koma and Famagusta lie within the Turkish-occupied north of the island we were unable to visit the places most immediately associated with my father's childhood. According to family tradition, my great grandfather, George Koyzis, died at age 110 in the mid 1930s. He is buried in Koma, where none of his descendants are now able to visit his grave.

The closest we got to Famagusta was my cousin's house in Dherynia. From her backyard we could make out one of the guard towers at the "green line" only a few hundred metres to the north. As if that were not unnerving enough, we later drove into town and climbed to the top of a four-storey building adjacent to the green line. There we were given binoculars and were able to gaze into the abandoned city where my relatives had lived prior to the Turkish invasion of 1974.

The experience was nearly indescribable. There in the distance lay hundreds of white buildings with not a sign of life for as far as one could see. Construction cranes stood poised over the landscape where they had stood immobile for 21 years. And disconnected windmills spun pointlessly in the wind, which howls eerily and seemingly endlessly on that stretch of the island.

In the divided capital city of Nicosia we visited the Byzantine Museum on the grounds of the archiepiscopal palace, which houses centuries-old icons and other more modern works of art. Here we found the famous Kanakaria mosaics,



DAVID KOYZIS PHOTOS

The Church of St. Lazarus, in Larnaca, Cyprus

which had been looted by the Turks from the Church of the Virgin of Kanakaria in the northern village of Lythrankomi. They were sold to an American art dealer, who obtained an export licence from the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus." In 1989 the government and Church of Cyprus successfully sued for their return in an Indiana court. The judge ruled that an export licence issued by an internationally unrecognized regime was invalid and that the mosaics should thus be returned to their rightful owners.

Salvaging some of a lost heritage

My great grandmother was born in Lythrankomi. She probably knew these mosaics well in their original home. Moreover, given the longstanding tendency for generations of inhabitants to remain in the same village, it is very likely that these mosaics were created by at least a collateral ancestor of mine. (They were probably made by a monk and monks do

not, of course, marry.) To see them in the museum left me with the sense that something had been salvaged of our family's lost heritage in the north.

Visiting Cyprus also helped me to understand my father a little better. His characteristic mannerisms, speech patterns and unconventional piety made better sense to me once I had experienced the culture in which he grew up. I also came to understand myself better in the process. At times I found myself moved to tears at something so simple as drinking from the pure waters of a mountain spring. Like my father, I too am often affected emotionally by the seemingly small things in life.

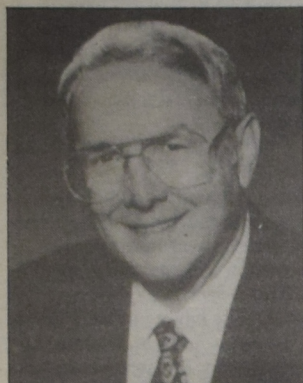
Needless to say, I will not soon forget this long delayed "homecoming," and I thank God for the opportunity he gave Nancy and me finally to visit a land that has always been and always will be a part of me.

David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer College in Ancaster, Ont.



On the horizon is the abandoned city of Famagusta, where Koyzis' father spent his youth.

Dobson has become an icon among neo-conservative Christians



Dr. James Dobson

Gordon Legge

COLORADO SPRINGS, Col. — In the four years it has been perched atop a hill near Colorado Springs, the headquarters for Focus on the Family has become a major tourist attraction.

This year more than 200,000 people are expected to tour the 47-acre neo-colonial complex, including more than 100,000 people this past summer.

Even though Dr. James Dobson heads a non-profit, evangelical Christian organization primarily concerned with supporting the traditional family and defending "righteousness," he has become an icon of the neo-conservative movement in both Canada and the United States. He's not only a religious figure; he is courted by conservative politicians from across the U.S.

A man for this season

But he's more than that. Dobson has also demonstrated to millions of ordinary Christians across the continent that he cares deeply about what is happening in their marriages and families, with their children and communities. "Parents of faith are at war with the culture," he says.

For conservatives, he's a man for this season.

Started in 1977, Focus has become a \$100 million-a-year media ministry. Dobson's radio program, in which he dispenses biblical and psychological advice, airs about 60,000 times a week on more than 2,300 radio stations in 58 countries, including 300 stations in Canada.

Dobson and his staff explained the rise of Focus on the

Family during a luncheon this summer for members of the Religion Newswriters' Association at Dobson's Colorado headquarters where the American flag is front and centre in the "chapelateria."

In a polished video about Dobson and the new headquarters, they talked about the influence of Dobson's prayerful father, a travelling evangelist who conducted revival meetings in small southern towns — "a man with no leather on the toes of his shoes."

Dobson, 59, it seemed, learned to pray before he learned to talk, a skill that has become a keystone of his ministry.

Dobson not a minister

Not a minister, Dobson earned a doctorate in child development from the University of Southern California. For 14 years he was a pediatrics professor and was on staff at a Los Angeles children's hospital as well.

While working as a teacher and therapist Dobson wrote his first book, *Dare to Discipline*. It was an instant best-seller and brought in so many requests for speeches that Dobson started a weekly radio show giving out parental advice.

The book and radio program filled an important gap in the American culture that had set aside conventional wisdom for that of Sigmund Freud and Benjamin Spock. Families were disintegrating and torn from their roots as they moved across the country pursuing careers and success. The prevailing culture didn't seem to give a hoot.

"I felt such a need to do something about it," Dobson remembers. "I took it one day at a time. I didn't know whether the phone would ring. It just exploded."

Putting an arm around hurting people

Today Focus receives an average of 3,700 calls a day and about 11,000 letters from people seeking advice.

To answer them, there is a staff of 120 correspondent assistants, half of whom have master's degrees. All told, there are 1,300 full- and part-time staff.

About 10 per cent of the calls concern crises such as suicide or spousal or child abuse. There are 19 counsellors who respond immediately. As well, there is a \$1-million benevolent fund from which they dispense hand-outs to help with needs such as unpaid rent.

"We just try and reach out and put an arm around someone who is hurting," explains Dobson.

Over the years the disintegration of North American society, even within the Christian church, has become painfully evident to Focus counsellors.

Fifteen years ago they dealt with concerns like bed-wetting and marital infidelity. Today many deal with child abuse, mental illness or prolonged depression. "You can almost see the unravelling of the social order over time," says Dobson.

Focus on the Family endeavors not to build up a dependency, so they have 1,600 volunteer counsellors across the continent who take referrals. As well, Focus produces an array of magazines, books, films and videotapes on a host of themes:

Institute for Family Studies, a new collegiate program that combines classes on family issues with hands-on work at Focus. "It could be the most important legacy of Focus on the Family," says Dobson.

To accomplish all that, Focus has a \$101 million budget, almost all of which is raised by donation.

Then there are Focus's political initiatives. As a non-profit organization, it doesn't make statements about particular political candidates. But that doesn't stop Dobson and his organization from talking about issues.

In 1980, Dobson became involved in influencing government policy in the U.S., promoting the primacy of the traditional family, premarital chastity and the sanctity of life.

Government unfriendly to families

"I realized how important government policy is to family development," he said. "Government has been very unfriendly to families during the last 20 years."

lican friends.

At the same time, Focus has quietly worked behind the scenes promoting "community impact seminars" which teach grassroots Christians how to have an influence on the political system at the local level. There have been a few in Calgary during the past couple of years.

'Biggest threat in the history of the world'

"There is really a clear line between value-oriented moral concern and moving into the political arena," he says.

When the Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing in September, Focus launched a major counter-offensive. Dobson asserts that it was the "radical feminist agenda that got me into this business."

He charged that a feminist agenda was attempting to wipe away any differences between men and women and promote the notion that there are not two genders, but five genders — male, female, bisexual, gay and lesbian.

They are seeking to eliminate



Focus on the Family's headquarters in Colorado Springs.

husband and wife, parent-child relationships, pro-life, pornography, sexual abstinence, values'-laden children's entertainment.

"It is the firm belief of the staff of Focus on the Family that only a return to the concepts of morality, fidelity and parental leadership can halt the continued slide of the family into marital breakup and all manner of interpersonal dysfunction," says Dobson.

This fall, Focus launched its

While it is a "non-political" organization, Dobson admits he wouldn't "cast a vote for a man or woman who is responsible for killing even one innocent baby." There are photographs of Dobson with former presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan.

During the past year, he's been visited by four or five Republican presidential candidates. He meets regularly with House speaker Newt Gingrich and has many Repub-

the traditional understanding that there are genetic differences between men and women and replace it with a theory that sexual roles are dictated by religious teachings and social norms, he says.

Dobson described it as "one of the biggest threats to the family in the history of the world."

Gordon Legge is religion editor of the Calgary Herald and a regular contributor to C.C.

Comment

Teach us to number our days

Brian Inkster

In this New Year I am reminded of the prayer in the Psalms: "Teach us to number our days, that we might gain hearts of wisdom" (Ps. 90:12).

This is Day 14,592 for me — the number of my days so far. It's a finite number, and is passing as quickly as an odometer reading on a speeding car. No wonder the Bible tells us to number our days. When you do, you are instantly struck by the finitude of life; you are driven to consider eternity and to apply your heart to wisdom.

In prison, the passing of seasons and the numbering of days are all-important to "doing time." Any prisoner will tell you that certain times of year magnify the pain of incarceration. For many, birthdays in jail sting. But most will tell you that Christmas tops the list for hard time, as it does for many people on the outside.

The numbering of days is literally what happens when a prisoner is sentenced. Prisoners are not sentenced to months or years behind bars. They are sentenced to *days*. I remember, 10 years ago, the first time I pulled up a prisoner's file card to study it. In the top left hand corner was a box labelled "Aggregate Sentence." I was haunted by what I saw. It read 540 *days*. Not 18 months, but 540 days. That cold number froze me.

More recently, I looked up on a computer the aggregate sentence of someone sentenced to 25 years. That number?: 9,132

days. All those vital days: countless sunrises and sunsets, mornings, evenings and afternoons. How many conversations, how many exchanged glances, how many memories in 9,132 days?

High irony

It strikes me as high irony, this numbering of days. What the Bible would have us do to gain our freedom in the Lord, prisoners have done to them as they lose their freedom in the world. The irony points to one of the Bible's own paradoxes: that we are all offenders (Rom. 3:23), and we are all prisoners or slaves — either of God, who frees us, or of some aspect of sin that enslaves us (Rom. 6:22). And if we do not number our own days and thereby gain hearts of wisdom, someone or something else will number our days for us while we apply our hearts to nonsense.

The good news for all of us is that we can number our days in the confidence that our time and our seasons are in God's wise and loving hands (Ps. 31:15; Job 14:5). And he gives us both "a future and a hope" (Jer. 29:11), that knows no seasons, a gift from him whose compassions are new every morning (Lam. 3:22-23).

On that timeless gift we can count every day.

Brian Inkster is executive director of Prison Fellowship Canada. The above was excerpted, with permission, from a letter to Friends of Prison Fellowship.

A view from B.C.

James Kwantes

Prime Minister Jean Chretien's declaration in late November that the government would pass a motion naming Quebec a "distinct society within Canada" and give a veto to four regions of the country was the act of a desperate man.

The unity package was an attempt to deliver on a promise Chretien had made to Quebec in the final days of the campaign when a separatist victory looked like a distinct possibility.

Predictably, the plan was accompanied by Liberal pleas for sacrifice and understanding from the rest of the country, particularly the Prairie provinces and British Columbia.

B.C. hard done by

Sacrifice is a concept with which British Columbians have grown familiar. It's arguably a financial sacrifice for B.C. to remain in confederation, as the province contributes more to Ottawa in tax dollars than it gets back in transfer payments. B.C. sacrifices power in the House of Commons, where it holds about 11 per cent of the seats despite having a steadily increasing proportion of the country's population (currently about 13 per cent). And it sacrifices influence in the Senate, where it holds one-quarter of the seats that Quebec holds despite having about half as many people.

Sacrifice in and of itself is not something British Columbians are opposed to. But when asked to sacrifice any changes to the status quo on the platter of Canadian unity, the answer across the province was a resounding No!

Veto power will paralyze

Why are British Columbians so opposed to "distinct society" status for Quebec?

Their opposition stems from a belief that the two words "distinct society" are far more powerful than simply an adjective used to describe Quebec. If they were simply that, British Columbians would be quick to endorse the phrase (and Quebecers quick to reject it).

On the contrary, "distinct society" has come to mean special status and special powers for Quebec, thanks to both the Meech Lake and Charlottetown accord constitutional proposals. True to form, Chretien's latest unity plan included a constitutional veto for Quebec. The vetos for the other four "regions," Ontario, the Maritimes, the Prairies and B.C., were merely window-dressing.

News of the unity package united all of B.C.'s three main political parties (a considerable accomplishment on any issue). The angry retort from people across British Columbia that their province also deserves a constitutional veto was more an expression of outrage than a serious demand. British Columbians don't want a constitutional veto for themselves — and they don't believe any single province should have one either. Five vetos would have the effect of paralyzing future constitutional change and enshrining the status quo.

Quebec isn't distinct?

What British Columbians would like to see is a country of 10 equal provinces instead of a constitution and laws giving more powers to certain provinces than others. They'd like to see changes in the federal system giving B.C. — and every other province — more power to determine their own destinies as provinces. And they dearly wish Prime Minister Chretien would display some understanding of Canada's western-most province instead of the combination of arrogance, ignorance and contempt that seems to characterize his feelings about B.C. and its concerns.

At a time in Canada's history when the country has never been so close to breaking apart, we need a leader with courage and vision. Instead, in Chretien we have a prime minister whose leadership in the referendum consisted of pretending it wasn't taking place and whose tunnel-vision ends at the Manitoba/Ontario border.

'Two founding nations' view obsolete

As many British Columbians see it, Canada faces two choices. It can either decentralize into a loose confederation of provinces by stripping the federal government of powers it can no longer afford to deliver on anyway, or break up and let the provinces re-arrange themselves into mutually beneficial entities.

The status quo that Jean Chretien and his followers are desperate to hang on to is no longer an option for Canada. And no amount of tears flowing from the eyes of Sheila Copps in the House of Commons will make it otherwise. The idea that Canada's Constitution and political structures should be based on the "two founding nations" concept is rooted in thought patterns of the 1860s, not the 1990s.

People who live in B.C. are as attached to the country as any other Canadians. But they are despairing of a political elite in central Canada wedded to obsolete views of our political arrangements and institutions.

As for the prospect of the rest of Canada splitting apart if Quebec were to opt for sovereignty? Many British Columbians are already preparing themselves psychologically for that very possibility.

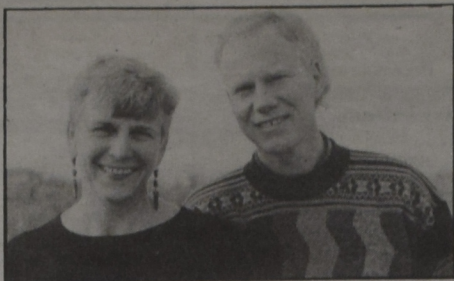
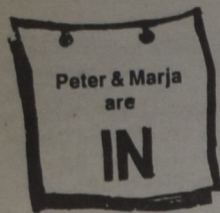
James Kwantes is a journalist working in B.C.'s Lower Mainland. He is also a regional correspondent for CC.



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Advice



Are Christians sinners or saints?

Dear P & M:

Is a Christian a sinner who is saved, or a saint who sins? I believe we have been redeemed, justified, forgiven, called sons and daughters of God and made complete in Christ. The list goes on. Why, then, do so many ministers still insist on calling us sinners? When we understand our true identity in Christ we can live a much more victorious life.

Dear Struggling Saint:

We should see ourselves as God sees us. When the Apostle Paul begins his letters by addressing New Testament believers as "saints," you know that that's God's view of us. Those same letters reveal that these new Christians had lots of spiritual problems. Still, they were called saints because of Christ's atoning sacrifice.

Your point is an important one, since people tend to either live up to their good name or down to their bad reputation. God keeps reminding us that we are "chosen people, holy and dearly loved" (Col. 3:12). That reminder helps us to live up to the new identity that we have in Christ. Preachers who keep hammering on sin only re-enforce the idea that we're no good anyway, so why bother.

Does this mean that the reality of sin can not be confronted from the pulpit? Of course not. God constantly exposes sin throughout the Bible. We see the brokenness of sin throughout the world and in our own lives. Jesus would not have had to come and die for us if we were not sinners. But the overriding other theme is *grace*. So it's a question of emphasis. And God's emphasis throughout the Scriptures is on his love for his people.

Each and every sermon that deals with sin must trumpet God's grace as well. You should never leave a church service feeling hopelessly dirty and ashamed. Even if the message has convicted you of your sin and your need to change, you must still be left with the clear assurance that God values you enough to die for you. As Paul writes: "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:1,2).

We are told that many Reformed Christians fear the prospect of dying because they think that God will punish them for all their sins and shortcomings. On their deathbeds they lack the assurance of salvation. How tragic! The Reformation was founded on the rallying cry, *Sola gratia*, — grace alone. Reformed preaching must focus on God's grace and salvation.

So how is it possible, then, that there are Christians in our midst who face death with fear after listening to a lifetime of gospel messages? Is it because, just as you suggest, some Reformed preaching has emphasized our sin at the cost of God's grace? Shame on any of us who, as preachers, office bearers, educators or even parents, have given the Good News such a bad slant.

Because of Christ's atoning sacrifice we can live and die in peace, with full assurance of our forgiveness. How may we as Christians see ourselves? As *forgiven sinners*; as *struggling saints*. Why? Because that's how God sees those who are in Christ.

Dear Readers:

It's the New Year. We want to wish all our saintly readers the blessedness and joy of the new life lived in Christ. May this year be one of inner peace and blessed assurance, whether you are faced with birth or death, peace or conflict, good times or bad. With Paul, may we learn the "secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want." What is that secret? It is to "do everything through him who gives us strength" (Phil. 4:12,13).

As for us, we hope to continue to hear from you. We now publish every other week and we need your letters to keep the column going. Please write.

Write to: Peter and Marja Slofstra, 16 Kimbermount Drive, St. Catharines, ON, L2N 5V6

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Alan Vandermaas, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

CR World Missions to provide scholarships for foreign students

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (CRWM) — Christian Reformed World Missions is at work in 30 countries around the world. But soon the agency's influence overseas will reach beyond these countries in the form of scholarships.

When the Christian Reformed Church Synod of 1995 decided to phase out the denomination's Committee for Educational Assistance for Churches Abroad (CEACA), the responsibilities for scholarships for overseas students were divided between World Missions and Calvin Theological Seminary. Twenty per cent of the ministry share funds formerly designated for CEACA (approximately \$17,000 annually) is now given to World Missions to provide scholarships. World Missions will support students who choose to attend schools other than Calvin and who are sponsored by churches which are not already assisted by World Missions.

bers of faculty at institutions which train pastors, including Reformed and other seminaries in France, Hungary, Nigeria, the Philippines and Costa Rica. The scholarships provided with the CEACA funds will be designated for students in other countries.

At a December 6 meeting, World Missions administrators set guidelines for awarding scholarships. Priorities will be placed on qualified students seeking higher levels of training for ministry, and those who will be studying at institutions in or close to their homelands. World Missions will also require sponsoring churches to demonstrate their own commitment with some financial assistance of their own. Students will be expected to show accountability by providing academic records and other indication of progress.

Priority on ministry training close to home

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(Revised February 1, 1995) Births \$25.00 Marriages & Engagements \$40.00 Anniversaries \$45.00 2-column anniversaries . . \$90.00 Obituaries \$45.00 Notes of thanks \$35.00 Birthdays \$40.00 All other one-column classified advertisements: \$15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is \$15.00. Letter under file number \$35.00 extra. Photos: \$25.00 additional charge. Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive ATTENTION! a) <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format. b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion. c) Photographs sent by fax are not acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original. d) <i>Christian Courier</i> will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements. e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$15.00 per column inch (GST incl.). NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS We offer a one-year subscription for only \$25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the <i>Christian Courier</i> and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose \$25.00 and the couple's correct address. Christian Courier 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313	 VANDERSLUIS: Rev. Harold and Sylvia (nee Vanderheiden) thank and praise God for the precious gift of RACHEL IRENE born on Nov. 27, 1995, weighing 9 lbs., 1 oz. A new sister for Annamaria and Laura. Fourth grandchild for Jack and Irene VanderSluis of Rexdale, Ont., and eighth grandchild for Martin and Ann Vanderheiden of Hamilton, Ont. Home address: 148 Drive In Road, Pembroke, ON K8A 7P1	December 26, 1995 With thanks to God we announce the 25th wedding anniversary of our parents JOHN and HENNIE VAN ARRAGON (nee HOFLAND-DUIKER) Magda & Jake Binnema Rink & Marlene Duiker Len & Chris Duiker Maryke & John Sucasca John & Angeline Van Arragon George & Lisa Van Arragon Joyce & John Uweland Henry & Kim Duiker Paul & Kathy Van Arragon Linda Duiker & Rob Suzanne & Wayne Spronk Fred & Cyndi Van Arragon and 28 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Home address: 1242 Garth St., Hamilton, ON L9C 4L7	The Lord took unto Himself at His time on Dec. 15, 1995, FRANS MONSTER in his 80th year. Loving husband of Edziena Schuilinga. Dear father of: Mettje & Izaak Sevensma — Drachten, the Neth. John & Janice Monster — Solina, Ont. Robert & Joanne Monster — Mississauga, Ont. Angela & Bill DeVries — Newmarket, Ont. Proud grandfather of 16 grandchildren. Dear brother of Rie Monster, Utrecht, the Netherlands. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course. I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7). Correspondence address: HT212, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, ON L6V 3N2	Christian widow looking for an independent Christian gentleman, age 65-70. Interest in walking, reading and travelling. Send letters to File #2639, c/o <i>Christian Courier</i>, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.
	Birthdays	Obituaries	The Lord took to Himself on Dec. 14, 1995, from Holland Christian Homes, Brampton, Ont., AREND VOSKAMP born Oct. 9, 1905, in Vlaardingen, the Neth. "My eyes have seen your salvation." Predeceased by his wife Willempje Voskamp (nee VanderEyck) and two grandsons. Dear brother of Adri Roozenboom, Zoetermeer, the Neth. Dear father of: Dick Voskamp — Rockwood, Ont. John & Gerry Voskamp — Atwood, Ont. Jerry & Frances Heikens — Stouffville, Ont. Frank & Kathy Voskamp — Claremont, Ont. Eric & Linda Voskamp — Brooklyn, Ont. 18 grandchildren and 22 great-grandchildren. The funeral service was held on Dec. 16, 1995, at Holland Christian Homes, Brampton, Ont. Interment was in Pine Hills Cemetery, Scarborough, Ont.	ONE TO ANOTHER Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue \$5. Write to: #302, 1502-2nd Ave. S. Lethbridge, AB T1J 4A2
	DEVRIES:  Congratulations to Janna DeVries on the occasion of her 90th birthday! With joy and thankfulness to the Lord, we hope to celebrate the 90th birthday of our dear mother and grandmother, JANNA DEVRIES (nee VLONK) on Jan. 10, 1996. We rejoice with her and thank God for her life, faithfulness and love. Dick & Karen DeVries — Grand Rapids David, Jenna Alice DeVries — Samia An open house will be held Jan. 10, 1996, from 10 a.m.-12 p.m., at Pineview Apts., 1310 Exmouth St., Samia, Ont. Best wishes only. Home address: 1310 Exmouth St., Apt. #2, Samia, ON N7S 3X9	On Dec. 7, 1995, the Lord in His infinite wisdom took unto Himself IDA DE JONG (nee JANSSEN) at the tender age of 39, following a courageous battle with cancer. Loving wife of Ted, devoted mother to Emily and Sara. Beloved daughter of George and Ida Janssen of Tillsonburg. Dear sister of: Joanne & Tony Buist — Norwich, Ont. Bernice & Johan DeWolf — Bow Island, Alta. Shirley & Ken Talsma — Strathroy Marlene & Dave Lendvay — Burgessville, Ont. Beverly & Marcel VanStraten — Tillsonburg, Ont. nephews and nieces. Ida's life was a testimony of her faith and she will be missed by all who knew her. "The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear?" (Ps. 27:1).	It is with sadness and yet with assurance that we mourn the loss of our daughter-in-law and sister-in-law IDA DE JONG (nee JANSSEN) wife of Ted de Jong and mother of Emily and Sara. We are thankful for the life and the love she gave to our family. Mr. and Mrs. Ken de Jong — Hamilton, Ont. Betty de Jong Tillie & John Biebesheimer Helen & Selwyn Uittenbosch Jackie & Ralph Meyer Henry & Kathy de Jong Mary Ann de Jong and many nieces and nephews.	For Rent For Rent: Mobile home in Florida. 2 Bedrooms and 1 bathroom, big carport and sunroom. 4'x8' shed, on canal and lake. Hiddencove West, near Winterhaven, FL. Phone: (914) 293-8631. Apartment for rent. Private; over separate garage in park-like setting. Jordan, Ont., area. Kitchen with appliances, living room, one bedroom, 3-piece bath. Available Dec. 1, 1995. Phone (905) 562-7464 or (905) 562-5232. House for rent in Niagara Falls, Ont. Two bedrooms, 1 1/2 storey. \$650 per month, first and last. Does not include utilities. For more information please call (905) 358-9150 or (905) 358-7200 For rent in Smithville: Basement apartment; good for two adults \$550 a month, fridge, stove and utilities included. No smoking, no pets. For more information, call (905) 957-2596.
			Job Opportunities Director of Congregational Life and Youth The Chr. Ref. Church, Aylmer, Ont., is seeking applicants for a full-time associate pastor (ordained or lay person). Job description and brief profile of our congregation available upon request. Send letters of inquiry to Ed Weesjes, R.R. #3, St. Thomas, ON N5P 3S7. Phone (519) 631-6004.	Job Opportunities Herdsman/manager wanted. 44 tie stall barn. Some field work necessary. Call (613) 398-6956

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BRESLAU, Ont.: Woodland Chr. High School invites applications for the position of **teaching Vice-Principal** for the 1996-97 school year. This position will be half time administration and half time teaching. Administrative responsibilities may include attendance, discipline, curriculum and program development and scheduling. Interviews for this position are planned for mid-February 1996. Please direct inquiries and applications to:

Gary VanArragon, Principal
Woodland Chr. High School
R.R. #1, Breslau, ON N0B 1M0
Phone: (519) 648-2114
Fax: (519) 648-3402

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE, Alta.: Due to retirement, **Rocky Chr. School** invites applications for the position of school **principal/teacher**, to start at the beginning of the 1996/97 school year. Please forward a letter of application, resume, and a written philosophy of Christian Education prior to Jan. 15, 1996, to:

Robert Boodt, Chairperson of the Board
Rocky Chr. School
5204-54 Avenue
Rocky Mountain House, AB
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For additional information please contact Bill Slofstra, Principal, Rocky Christian School, at (403) 845-3516, or Fax (403) 845-4370.

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Job opportunities

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A doctorate is required as well as agreement with the College's Christian Statement of Faith. **Starting date:** July 1, 1996. **Deadline for application:** February 29, 1996.

Send application letter, curriculum vitae, copies of transcripts, and three letters of reference to: **Dr. S. Keith Ward, Vice President (Academic), The King's University College, 9125-50 St., Edmonton, AB T6B 2H3. Tel: (403) 465-3500. Fax: (403) 465-3534. E-mail: skward@kingsu.ab.ca**

The King's University College is an equal opportunity employer, but in accordance with Canadian employment and immigration regulations, this advertisement is directed to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

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Lacombe Chr. School is a school of 340 students serving grades K-9. The school is located in the town of Lacombe, located midway between Edmonton and Calgary.

The Lacombe Chr. School is looking for an educational leader who is a committed Christian and who has the experience, vision and skills necessary to lead our staff and school.

Please send resume, statement of education philosophy and other pertinent information prior to **January 31, 1996**, to:

Mr. John Piers, Principal
Lacombe Chr. School, 5206-58 Street, Lacombe, AB T4L 1G9
Phone: (403) 782-6531; Fax: (403) 782-5760

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Vice-President (Administration & Finance)

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As the chief financial officer of the College, this person reports to the President and is responsible for the administrative and financial services of the College. Candidates should have a positive record of financial, administrative and supervisory responsibilities and an ability to provide leadership which demonstrates a commitment to the Reformed Christian basis of the College. A bachelor's degree plus a professional accounting designation or a related master's degree are also required.

Submit nominations and applications, including a resume and three references to:

Dr. Justin D. Cooper, President
Redeemer College
777 Highway 53 E.
Ancaster, ON L9K 1J4

Applications will be received until January 31, 1996 or until the position is filled.

Redeemer College offers equal employment opportunities to qualified applicants. In accordance with Canadian Immigration requirements, this advertisement is directed to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

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Events

REDEEMER COLLEGE



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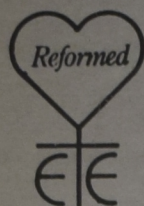
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DIRECTOR

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) — Canada

The Christian Reformed Church in North America (Canadian Office) is seeking applicants for the position of **Director, CRWRC (Canada)**. This position is responsible for the administration and implementation of the work of CRWRC (Canada) in the domestic and international sector, the promotion of CRWRC (Canada) to its Canadian constituency, and maintaining an effective liaison with CRWRC-U.S. and other agencies of the CRCNA.

The successful candidate should have a strong sense of compassion for the poor and a commitment to working collaboratively within a binational structure. The qualified applicant should preferably have a university degree in human services or the equivalent, and 3-5 years of related experience.

For consideration, please submit by **January 31, 1996**, a copy of your resume and a letter stating your interest to:

Director of Personnel
Christian Reformed Church in North America (Canadian Office)
3475 Mainway, P.O. Box 5070
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8
(905) 336-2920/Fax (905) 336-8344.

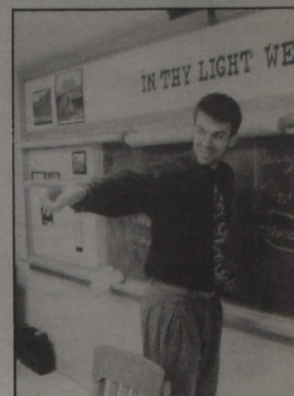
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Students from Classis Toronto who are preparing for ministry in the Chr. Ref. Church are invited to apply now for financial aid from classis for the 1996-97 school year. The completed application form must be returned by **March 15, 1996**. Please contact **Rev. John W. Luth, 25 Davidson St., Barrie, ON L4M 3R9**

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Events

Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

Jan. 19 American pianist Daniel Paul Horn in concert, 8 p.m., TKUC Performance Hall, Edmonton, Alta. Info.: (403) 465-3500.

Jan. 24 The King's University College and the ICS (Alberta Chapter) present Dr. Calvin Seerveld who will speak on "Philosophical Aesthetics at Home with the Lord, an Untimely Valedictory," 8 p.m., TKUC Performance Hall, Edmonton, Alta. The lecture will be followed by a piano recital by Dr. Joachim Segger and a coffee social. Info.: (403) 465-3500.

Jan. 24-25 The King's University College Ninth Interdisciplinary Conference. Theme: "The Halo of Human Imagination." Speaker: Dr. Calvin Seerveld with breakout sessions with TKUC faculty. **Jan. 24:** keynote address at 2:30 p.m. **Jan. 25** performance of "The Greatest Song" at 9:30 a.m. Conference is open to community and is free of charge. Info.: (403) 465-3500.

Jan. 26 "King's View Friday" at the TKUC, Edmonton, Alta. Call (403) 465-3500 or toll free 1-800-661-8582.

Jan. 28 Dutch worship service led by Rev. Riemer Praamsma, 3 p.m., CRC, Ancaster, Ont.

Feb. 7 The 1996 annual "Church and the Law" seminar, 8:45 a.m. - 3:45 p.m., Queensway Cathedral, 1536 The Queensway, Etobicoke (Toronto), Ont. For registrations call (519) 669-5137 or fax (519) 669-3291.

March 1-3 "Reformed Engaged Encounter" weekend, Notre Dame Centre, Waterdown, Ont. Info./registration: (905) 957-4505. (#)

March 29-31 "Reformed Marriage Encounter" weekend, Peterborough, Ont. Info./registration (905) 386-6523. (#)

News

Mayor of Vancouver trusts God, seeks help of Christians

James Kwantes

VANCOUVER — Vancouver mayor Phillip Owen told an audience of Vancouver Christians November 30 that he shares his faith through one-to-one evangelism and in small groups.

"Often people ask me, 'How can you be so calm with all the busy-ness of your job?'" said Owen. "I tell them that for one thing, going to church on Sunday gives me a great deal of strength."

At a fundraising dinner for the Council of Christian Churches, Owen talked about the pressures of his job and the opportunities he gets to witness. Organizer David Richardson describes the council as an interdenominational group attempting to give the city's Christian churches and individuals a collective voice in moral and social issues. Last year, it joined other community groups in successfully fighting an attempt by a U.S. company to build a giant casino on Vancouver's waterfront.

Mayor Owen, a member of St. John's Anglican Church in Vancouver, said he does not feel equipped to minister to large groups. But he said Christianity is a constant source of peace for him in his capacity as the mayor of one of Canada's fastest-growing cities.

Owen said a card he bought recently states "Do not feel personally, totally, irrevocably responsible for everything. That's my job. Love, God."

Church has role helping prostitutes

Owen calls himself a moderate on the topic of church/state relations. He rejects what he labels over-reaction on both sides — people who don't want any religious involvement in politics, and people who think religion and politics should be intertwined.

Owen did call for more Christian involvement in one of the biggest problems facing the burgeoning city: prostitution. "Churches have a big social role to play helping the girls who get sucked into this lifestyle," he said.

Owen admitted it is frustrating — both for him and city police — to see judges routine-



Vancouver mayor Phillip Owen

ly let pimps and johns go free.

"You see guys with suits on go before the judge and say, 'I was only kidding around with her. I have a family and a good job where I live and I'm a respected member of the community,'" said Owen. "But the

pimps and the johns are the real problem in this issue."

Owen said the city recently opened a safe house for teenage prostitutes in a residential area of Vancouver. The house, in an undisclosed location, has room for six young women.

Being socially responsible

Owen pinpointed the drug trade as another serious problem the city must face. He said a majority of the city's petty crime, which is increasing rapidly, is related to Vancouver's drug trade.

As for Vancouver's building boom, Owen said he's committed to ensuring that new, upscale developments also contain housing for the less fortunate, such as seniors, the disabled and people on social assistance. Critics have accused Owen and his conservative Non-Partisan Association Party, which has a large majority on

city council, of favoring large developers while ignoring poor people who are being displaced by condominium construction.

"The priority of putting up houses for all the people coming in is the private sector's primarily," said Owen. "But we have to be socially responsible."

Owen also pledged to crack down on a booming marijuana store in the city, which sells marijuana seeds, growing equipment and manuals, as well as hemp paper and clothes. Store owner Marc Emery appeared on the cover of the *Wall Street Journal* last month.

Owen's comments about the Hemp B.C. store came after someone asked him why city police are rigorously enforcing "bubble-zone" legislation around Vancouver's abortion clinics, which forbids pro-life protest and prayer, while ignoring blatant violations of the law at the marijuana store.

Leading ecologists urge ties between environmentalists and the church

Jeff Adams

CALGARY — Two of North America's leading ecologists called late last year for stronger ties between the environmental movement and the Christian church.

Rod Nash and Harvey Locke conceded that the Bible (including Gen. 1:28, which refers to humankind subduing nature) has often been used as an excuse to exploit the environment. But they argued that this runs counter to Christ's message of self-sacrifice and protection of the weak, which coincides with ecologists' message of sustained development and wildlife preservation.

Stealing always wrong

"It would bode well for environmentalists to link hands with the clergy and the religious movement," said Nash, a former University of California professor. Nash is also the author of what many environmentalists call a ground-breaking book: *Wilderness in the American Mind*.

The same Judaeo-Christian

ethics that tell 20th century society it's wrong to steal from or enslave another human being can be used to argue against stealing from or enslaving nature, said Locke. Locke is president of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society.

Nash and Locke spoke at the University of Calgary midway through a three-day conference entitled "Environmental Ethics and Practices in Back-Country Management."

Locke noted that a careful reading of the Bible shows that Jesus consistently discouraged the type of self-interest that has led to depleted fisheries, polluted rivers and other environmental problems. And so Jesus' modern-day followers should be strong advocates for the environment, Locke said.

The Christian church "is a huge untapped area" of support for environmentalists, agreed one audience member, who said he conveys ecological messages while teaching Sunday school.

Nash, despite recognizing the role religion and self-sacrifice can play, predicted that fear will

remain the most effective motivation for people to become environmentally conscious. And that's not necessarily bad, he said. "We need to be more afraid" of the consequences of environmental degradation.

Keep federal powers

Canadians should also be more afraid of divesting additional federal powers to the provinces, warned fellow panel member Vivian Pharis. Pharis, a veteran director of the Alberta Wilderness Association, noted that the Quebec referendum has renewed calls from Alberta's Ralph Klein and other premiers for Ottawa to grant more authority to the provinces. This could seriously weaken the federal government's ability to enforce a range of existing legislation, including environmental laws, she said.

Pharis said Canadians will never succeed, domestically or internationally, in tackling issues such as endangered species and global warming if Canada's national government is "impotent."

News Digest

Swedes get 'crystalized cathedral'

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (EP) — A northern Swedish town found a cool way to celebrate this past Christmas. Residents of the town constructed a Christmas-season church made completely from ice and snow. The inside walls of the 161-square-foot church were decorated with religious scenes, and the altar was composed of ice, wire reports stated.

Services were held in the "crystalized cathedral" every Friday, Saturday and Sunday throughout the Advent and Christmas season.

Michigan Reformed church opposes Muslim scout leader

KALAMAZOO, Mich. (EP) — A Cub Scout leader has been denied a leadership position because he is a Muslim. Haven Reformed Church in Kalamazoo, Mich., acknowledged that Umar Abdul-Mutakallim is a good leader, but Dale Boone, the church's program director, said, "For any of the programs we offer here, it only seems consistent that the people leading those programs would at least identify with what it is that we represent."

The Cub Scouts are a "pre-Boy Scout" group operating under the Boy Scouts of America charter. The Boy Scouts still consider themselves a Christian organization and under their charter agreement a scout troop is a project of the sponsoring church or community organization; that gives Haven Reformed the right to select the groups' leaders, though the scouts are not directly church-related.

Abdul-Mutakallim, who left the pack with his stepson, responded by saying, "Of all places, scouting is a place where we should be fostering community, fellowship and brotherhood."